

Hafa Adai!

# Saipan Tribune

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## OPINION METER

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INSIDE



## Toy Marketers

Mommy bloggers don't just gab about spilled milk and poop diapers.

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## Flash Flood

The death toll from last week's flash flooding in the Philippines tops 1,000.

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**Fundraising drive for victims of PH typhoon. PAGE 3**  
**Hyatt steps up to the plate with toys donation. PAGE 6**

## Kilili: CW workers would no longer be exempt from FICA

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO  
haidee\_eugenio@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP), who has been in com-

munication with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, said yesterday that once Filipino and Korean workers have already been granted Commonwealth-only worker

status, they are no longer exempt from paying federal taxes. He said this is based on his understanding of law and policies.

Almost all other workers in the

CNMI have been paying Federal Insurance Contribution Act taxes, which cover Social Security and Medicare.

**See KILILI on Page 4**

## 2 masked men rob poker arcade

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

**T**wo masked men armed with a rifle and machete robbed a poker arcade in Susupe early Tuesday morning.

No shot was fired and no one was injured but the suspects managed to run off with over \$300 cash from JL Poker II, police said yesterday.

A surveillance camera showed that the crime happened in less than four minutes, according to police.

Police officer Jason Tarkong said investigation showed that two men wearing black masks entered JL Poker II beside Family Market around 4am.

One suspect, wearing green Army fatigues, pointed a rifle at the security

**See MASKED on Page 4**



## YOUTHFUL TALENT

A member of the Proa Music Society, center, interacts with some of the clients at the Aging Center on Wednesday. NMC's only chartered music club performed rollicking versions of Christmas hits such as *Feliz Navidad*, *Jingle Bell Rock*, and *Last Christmas* for the island's elderly.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

**See story on Page 6**

## Hospital's monthly collection doubles

» **More than \$1M in service fees collected in November**

By MONETH G. DEPOSA  
moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Since the healthcare corporation took over the former Department of Public

Health in October, significant strides have already been achieved, among them collections that reached \$1 million in November 2011, according to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial yesterday.

"That is one big improvement. Honestly, I was shocked last month when they collected more than \$1 million at the hospital," said Fitial during a surprise visit to the Commonwealth Health Center yesterday.

Corporation chief executive of-

## RELATED NEWS

► **Fitial, Babauta check out lab expansion at hospital. PAGE 5**

ficer Juan N. Babauta confirmed this with the *Saipan Tribune*, attributing it to the immediate measures put in place by the corporation.

From only one coder prior to the corporation, **See HOSPITAL on Page 4**



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## Local

### Justices affirm wire thief's conviction

The CNMI Supreme Court has affirmed the conviction of a man who stole \$24 worth of copper wires from a daycare center in Koblerville.

In its opinion issued Tuesday, the high court ruled that Simon Sebuu did not have a right to a jury trial because the orally amended information did not charge him with a felony.

The high court noted that Sebuu asked the trial court to issue written findings of fact and conclusions of law only after the trial court had already pronounced him guilty of criminal mischief.

"He failed to make the request before the trial court's general finding of guilty, as required by the plain language of [NMI Rule of Criminal Procedure 23(c)]," stated the high court opinion

penned by associate justice John A. Manglona and concurred by acting chief justice Alexandro C. Castro, and justice pro tem Edward Manibusan.

Rule 23 governs the trial court's duty to enter findings of fact and conclusions of law in a case tried without a jury.

Moreover, the justices said, even if Sebuu's request for written findings would have been timely, they would not have found error because Rule 23(c) explicitly permits the trial court to enter its findings orally.

Sebuu was charged with burglary, theft, and criminal mischief for burglarizing the Little Angels Day Care. In August 2007, the jury acquitted him of burglary but Superior Court associate judge David Wiseman

found him guilty of theft and criminal mischief.

Wiseman sentenced him to two years in prison.

Sebuu appealed his bench conviction, arguing that he should be granted a new trial on the charge of criminal mischief because he was improperly denied a trial by jury.

Sebuu also argued that he should be given a new trial because Wiseman failed to render in writing specific findings of fact after he asked for them.

The justices said the record shows that Wiseman permitted the government to orally amend the first amended information on the day of trial, over Sebuu's objection.

The justices said the right to **See JUSTICE on Next Page**

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## Govt settles with woman suing DPS, cops

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

A lawyer disclosed yesterday that a government lawyer has already handed a settlement check to a Korean woman who had sued the Department of Public Safety and some police officers whom she had accused of conspiring to destroy evidence to prevent the prosecution of a drunk motorist.

## UFO launches fundraising drive for victims of Philippine typhoon

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**  
clarissa\_david@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The United Filipino Organization is spearheading a fundraising drive to benefit the victims of Typhoon Sendong, which ravaged the southern Philippines, claiming at least 1,002 lives, with hundreds more missing and leaving behind destroyed villages and infrastructures only days before Christmas.

Bong Malasarte, president of the umbrella organization of some 30 Filipino groups in the CNMI, said the aftermath of one of the deadliest disasters to hit Mindanao is so heartrending that UFO officers and members felt compelled to do something to respond to the needs of thousands of affected families.

"Filipinos are known for their spirit of *bayanihan* or helping their fellow countrymen in times of need. It is during this time when we should extend whatever help we can to help the calamity survivors and make them feel that we care even though we're miles away," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Malasarte said the group decided to just solicit monetary donations since shipment of in-kind contributions would be challenging and costly.

"At this point, I think monetary donations are what they need, given that many businesses and individuals back in the Philippines are already taking care of the basic needs of the victims," he said.

Malasarte said there will be several locations where they will accept monetary donations.

Drop-off points and schedules are as follows: Dec. 22 at the Garapan Street Market at Paseo de Marianas from 6pm to 8pm; Dec. 23, Filcom Pavilion in Susupe from 5pm to 8pm; Dec. 24, Sabalu Market in Susupe from 8am to noon; Christmas Day or Dec. 25, Filcom Pavilion from 8am to 4pm.

Malasarte noted that there is

Attorney David Banes, counsel for Ae Ja Elliot Park, told the U.S. District Court for the NMI yesterday that assistant attorney general Tiberius Mocanu gave Park the check pursuant to their settlement agreement.

Banes asked the court to remove the show-cause hearing from the calendar, which Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona did.

In February 2010, the federal court was informed that Park

and DPS, Police Sgt. Anthony Macaranas, Police Officer Jarrod Manglona, and former police officer Michael Langdon, had reached a settlement, except for Park's claim for attorney's fees and costs.

Then federal court judge Alex R. Munson accepted the settlement and dismissed the case, but retained jurisdiction to decide the attorney's fees and costs.

The amount as well as the terms and conditions of the settlement were kept confidential.

In July 2010, U.S. District Court for the NMI visiting judge William Alsup approved the settlement and dismissed the lawsuit with finality after DPS or the CNMI government agreed to settle Park's claim for attorney's fees and court costs.

According to court documents, Park and Norbert Duenas Babauta were involved in a head-on collision on 16 Highway in Papago on Feb. 12, 2006. Both were taken to the hospital.

Park asserted that Babauta was drunk at the time of the accident, but that police officers did not investigate his intoxication because Babauta is a local.

Some legal issues even reached the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit before the parties reached the settlement.

no minimum amount required when donating to the cause. "Any amount, no matter how small, will definitely help. It would go a long way," he said.

Proceeds of the fund drive will be given to the Philippine Red Cross. Malasarte said they are now trying to communicate with the emergency response organization. If that doesn't work out, Malasarte said they plan to deposit the donation in the ABS-CBN Foundation's *Sagip Kapamilya* account.

"For now, our utmost concern is to be able to raise the funds, all of which will be accounted for by UFO volunteers," he said.

Malasarte added that they plan to turn over the collected donation right after Christmas so that the victims can benefit from it right away.

He urged the public, particularly the Filipino community in the CNMI, to donate and help provide aid to all the survivors in this season of giving. "I know times are hard for us but we are still fortunate that we did not suffer the same fate. Christmas is a time of giving and sharing and so I encourage everyone to help the victims of Typhoon Sendong."

To donate, visit the drop off points or call 287-5525 for more information.

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## JUSTICE

From Page 2

a jury trial attaches when the defendant is accused of committing a felony punishable by more than five years imprisonment or by more than \$2,000 fine.

The amended information, the justice said, reduced the criminal mischief charge to a misdemeanor. (Ferdie dela Torre)

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## 'Those covered by HR 1466 need to maintain legal status but...'

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**  
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REPORTER

While congressional action on H.R. 1466 has been stalled, Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) said that those covered by the legislation need to maintain legal status and this includes securing parole with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Dekada

Movement president Bonifacio Sagana said that many of those covered by the bill who have yet to receive a grant of parole are now starting to worry.

"They don't have any document or proof that they have applied for parole. They don't have anything to show any immigration agent if they're asked for any proof of their status," Sagana told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

Many of those covered by HR 1466 are long-term foreign workers in the CNMI who are now unemployed and have minor U.S. citizen children. While others have already been granted parole, many others are still waiting for a decision on their application.

While over 11,000 foreign workers are now just waiting for a USCIS deci-

sion on the CW petitions filed by their employers, other jobless aliens covered by H.R. 1466 are waiting for parole.

Sagana said those who mailed their parole request to Guam only have a receipt from the postal office, and those who just dropped off their parole request at the USCIS office in Garapan don't even have a receipt.

"And their umbrella permits expired on Nov. 27, so they don't have any document. They only have a USCIS statement about parole," said Sagana.

Sablan, in an interview yesterday, said he has responded to all the questions raised by Congress members about H.R. 1466.

"They were told this is an amnesty, it is not. They were told that it would cover illegals, it's not. The legislation is written in a way that if you're illegal, this bill doesn't help you," he said, adding that he does not support amnesty for illegals either.

Sablan said he does not call the shots so he wouldn't know when his HR 1466 will be acted on by the U.S. House of Representatives.

But Sablan added that there's administrative remedy provided by USCIS by way of a grant of parole, on

a case-by-case basis, mostly to those covered by HR 1466. If granted, such parole would allow these individuals to lawfully remain in the CNMI until Dec. 31, 2012.

He said such one-year period also provides additional time for these individuals to still find a job, and secure a CW status.

HR 1466 proposes a "CNMI-only resident status" for immediate relatives of U.S. citizens as of May 8, 2008 and continuing to be on the islands, CNMI permanent residents, those born in the CNMI between Jan. 1, 1974 and Jan. 9, 1978, and the spouses, parents or children of U.S. citizens under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Sablan said he has yet to see Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's proposed alternative bill, so he couldn't comment on it. Fitial said he is proposing an employment-based visa.

Congress also has yet to act on the Interior's recommendations to grant improved immigration status to long-term foreign workers in the CNMI.

Sablan said there's nothing in the federalization law that says something has to be done by Congress on the Interior recommendations.

### COMMUNITY BRIEFS

#### Public library closed on Saturdays

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library will be closed on Dec. 24 and 31 in observance of Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve and pursuant to Governor Fitial's directive. For more information, contact 235-READ (7323) or 7322 or visit us at [www.cnmilibrary.com](http://www.cnmilibrary.com). (PR)

#### Military training on Farallon de Medinilla

The U.S. military will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla

on the following dates and times:

■ Dec. 22, 7am, to Dec. 23, midnight

■ Dec. 23, 7am, to Dec. 24, midnight

The public—especially fisherman, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. (PR)

#### Managaha Beach red-flagged

The Division of Environment Quality

has red-flagged Managaha Beach and is advising the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of this location for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified. DEQ said that samples collected from this site had excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria (enterococci) that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water. Water samples were taken from 12 locations on Saipan this week. For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. (DEQ)

## Busan media tour to bring NMI \$1.2M exposure

The Marianas Visitors Authority is preparing to welcome Korea's MBC TV'S "Live Today Busan" next week for a location shoot that is expected to bring the Northern Mariana Islands over \$1-million worth of international exposure value.

"Live Today Busan" is a popular live show in the Youngnam region of Korea, including Busan, the country's second largest city. The 55-minute show airs weekdays at 6:50pm to viewership of hundreds of thousands of potential visitors. The show contents include current social issues, tour destination information, and personality interviews.

"With Delta Air Lines' announced launch of new service from Busan to Saipan next month, 'Live Today Busan' is an excellent opportunity to introduce the Northern Marianas to potential travelers in the region," said MVA marketing manager Bruce Bateman. "We are pleased to partner with Delta in bringing this three-person team to our islands next week."

From Dec. 26-29, 2011, "Live Today Busan" will visit Saipan and Tinian to produce three, 10-minute segments that will air in January. The estimated exposure value from the show is \$1.2 million.

The team will stay at Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino and Aqua Resort Club. While on Tinian they will take an all-terrain vehicle island tour, a turtle-watching and snorkeling tour, and lunch at JC Café and a barbecue dinner at Taga Beach. On Saipan, the media team will visit Managaha, take a jungle tour, enjoy a sunset dinner cruise on the *Stars n' Stripes*, film along picturesque Beach Road, take in the SandCastle Saipan cocktail show, and stop at the "I Love Saipan" store. Island cuisine will be explored at the Tuesday night Farmer's Market, a sunset beach barbecue dinner, lunch at Capricciosa's and Revolving Restaurant 360, and breakfast at Café at the Park. (MVA)

### KILILI

From Page 1

Businesses with Filipino and Korean workers have been waiting for policy guidelines from IRS before deducting FICA taxes from their employees' salaries, like they do with other employees.

Press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday that the Fitial administration would like to receive clarification from IRS, which he said is the "appropriate agency to communicate any change in such policy."

Demapan, however, said that assistant attorney general Jim Stump received an email from Dee Robinson of IRS, "stating that they are working with the IRS Special Counsel on setting proposed dates for a meeting with the Fitial administration."

"We have yet to receive further communication at this time," he said.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial wrote to IRS chief counsel William J. Wilkins to seek clarification on an unofficial, redacted copy of an Oct. 5 communication from the IRS stating that Filipino workers are no longer exempt from paying FICA taxes because of the implementation of federal immigration in the CNMI. The governor is opposed to additional taxation.

The redacted IRS letter that circulated in the CNMI stated that Filipino workers in the CNMI are no longer exempt from FICA, unless they hold a valid H-2 U.S. visa.

Sablan, who flew in from Washington, D.C. on Tuesday, said from his understanding, the law says that CW workers,

once they get their CW permit or status, "are not exempted from FICA taxes."

"My understanding is that no FICA taxes should be applicable until the employee gets the CW permit," he said in an interview at his office in Susupe.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service gave itself up to Jan. 31, 2012, to adjudicate CW petitions filed by CNMI employers for over 11,000 foreign workers in the CNMI.

This means many of the Filipino and Korean workers who were petitioned by their employers for a CW status will have to start paying FICA taxes early next year.

Sablan said he understands the CNMI economy is on a decline and the impact additional taxes would have on affected employees and employers.

"But let me put it this way. Are you a member of the CNMI Retirement Fund? Do you have children in public schools? Your answers may be 'no' but the taxes you pay also go to those programs. Anywhere you go, there are taxes, so that doesn't mean that because you don't have children in the Public School System or not a member of the Retirement Fund, that your taxes should be less than those who do. This is a system of government taxing people to pay for programs and services. Some people benefit from those programs and some people don't. FICA taxes benefit some people, but they don't benefit some," he said.

Sablan said the exemption for Filipino workers in the CNMI is under U.S. law, specifically 26 USC Section 3121(b)18, while the exemptions for Korean workers is covered by a treaty

between the United States and Korea.

The delegate reiterated that, with the application of FICA taxes among most Filipinos and Koreans in the CNMI, it will no longer be cheaper for employers to hire from the Philippines or Korea than to hire from the resident population.

"It levels the playing field," he added.

Eric Plinske, a current board member and former president of the Society for Human Resource Management, said that without direct answers or policy guidance from IRS, each employer has to make calculated risks.

Plinske, manager for Staywell Health Insurance on Saipan, said employers would want to know when, if at all, this taxation applies to previously exempt workers.

Ruel Villacrusis, owner of RNV Construction, which employs Filipino workers, said given the current state of the local economy, paying for additional taxes will be a big burden on their business and employees.

He said if Filipino workers are indeed no longer exempted from FICA taxes, employers may just have to let go of their employees, if not this year then next year because of an added cost that employers didn't anticipate.

"But if IRS really says Filipino workers have to pay these taxes, then we have no choice but to follow," he said.

Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Douglas Brennan has also sought clarification on the FICA taxation among previously exempt workers.

A minimum wage earner in the CNMI pays over \$45 in FICA taxes a month in 2011. Their employers' share is almost \$62 a month.

### HOSPITAL

From Page 1

poration's takeover, Babauta said that CHC now has six coders, decentralized in key hospital areas. Training is ongoing for more coders who will speed up the inputting of medical records so that billing and collection will be done right away.

The corporation also discovered piles of uncoded medical records. Based on its initial assessment, the hospital's uncollected bills amount to about \$52 million, of which only over \$20 million can be potentially collected because the statute of limitations has already run out.

Babauta told *Saipan Tribune* that the over \$1 million collected in November doubles the amount the hospital usually collects every month. He promised further improvements in three areas: coding, billing, and collection.

He attributed the improvement to everything they have initiated at the hospital, including adding more coders and decentralizing them and efforts to stay away from paper forms and having everything computerized and automated.

"By the end of the day, it's really how much we collect [that matters]," he said.

Corporation officials hope that collection will continue to increase in coming months as the corporation stabilizes the automated central system.

### MASKED

From Page 1

guard. The second suspect, dressed in desert combat uniform, was armed with a machete and tried to open the cashier's door, which was locked.

The first suspect pointed the gun at the cashier through the cashier's window booth, prompting the cashier to throw cash out of the window and onto the floor.

The second suspect picked up the money then fled on foot with the other suspect.

Tarkong said the Department of Public Safety and NMI Crime Stoppers Program are seeking help from the public for information about the

Since the discovery that only 50 percent of hospital services are actually being charged, Fitial said the corporation has been serious in charging the necessary fees for all services delivered. "That's one major factor," he said.

Babauta said another big factor that is helping the situation is the involvement of doctors in coding their patients' medical records.

"Ultimately, we would like to involve the doctors in the process because there are no other people more qualified to encode these records than doctors...and we need their help. Doctors can read their writings and oftentimes, coders have to go to them to verify something and when you do that, you're already behind [schedule]. We want to get them involved as soon as possible because it will greatly help in improving hospital collection and revenues," said Babauta.

Despite the creation of the corporation as an independent agency, it is still functioning as a semi-government entity because it still heavily relies on the general fund for operations. Babauta said the \$1 million they collected in November was used for the personnel cost of its more than 600 employees.

"We've been sharing the cost with the government and we used this collection in paying the \$800,000 personnel cost for our employees," he said.

He disclosed that the corporation still owes its vendors more than \$1 million in unpaid obligations.

suspects.

"Please contact the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272 should you want to remain anonymous, or use our website at [www.nmicrimestoppers.com](http://www.nmicrimestoppers.com). Crime Stoppers pays up to \$1,000 for any information leading to an arrest. It pays to call," said Tarkong, who is also the Crime Stoppers coordinator.

Last Aug. 29, a man armed with a knife tied a 56-year-old male cashier and robbed Capitol Poker in Sadog Tasi around 9am.

A surveillance camera captured the broad daylight robbery. The establishment's owner showed the footage to investigators.

KSPN2 ran the footage of the robber, resulting in the arrest of the suspect after a few days.

## Fitial, Babauta check out lab expansion at hospital

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**  
moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. officials made a surprise visit at the Commonwealth Health Center's laboratory yesterday to check on the progress of improvements being done at the facility.

Corporation chief executive officer Juan N. Babauta said that the laboratory's renovation will address, for one, the numerous Medicare citations that find the laboratory not meeting its standards and requirements, particularly in terms of space.

The governor and Babauta were accompanied by some members of the management team and board chair Jack Tor-

res in their inspection. Fitial was seen personally asking staff about specific functions of the laboratory and how certain processes are done.

He was told that due to budget concerns, key laboratory positions have been left unfilled for quite some time now. These include, among others, a laboratory manager and lab technicians. Babauta assured that this will be the corporation's next priority.

According to Babauta, the lab renovation and expansion was initially projected to cost \$35,000 but they decided to just tap their in-house personnel to do the work, bringing down the cost to \$4,000.

"We decided to do it in-house, which means we utilized our own local employees and



maintenance to do the work. We practically saved about \$30,000 for CHC," he said.

Among the renovation work is the creation of a wider cashier station. It was Fitial's first time to see the improvements yesterday and he said he is pleased to see the changes.

Besides the laboratory expansion, the corporation is also considering privatizing some hospital departments, such as the dental department and the cafeteria and kitchen.

MONETH G. DEPOSA  
Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Juan N. Babauta inquire with hospital laboratory unit staff Wilma Moran about the specific functions and duties of the unit during their visit to the facility yesterday morning.

## Froilan has 2 other consultants on \$1 contracts

Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) said yesterday he has two other consultants on a \$1 contract since March this year: former senator Maria Frica Pangelinan and Dr. Elizabeth Rechebei.

He said he plans to extend their contracts up to Sept. 30, 2012, if they agree.

"They are both smart people. The former senator knows her ways and loves to draft legislation. She has also helped with the comprehensive labor bill. Dr. Rechebei is also an education specialist," said Tenorio.

Pangelinan served in the 16th Legislature. She was chair of the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee. Rechebei is one of the recipients of the 2009 Governor's Humanities Awards for preserving traditional and cultural practices.

Tenorio has a Maryland-

based lawyer as consultant, David Cahn, for \$300 to \$350 an hour. He served as Tenorio's counsel when Tenorio was still governor. Tenorio said he will extend Cahn's contract until Sept. 30, 2012.

"As I said before, it's worth it," he said.

Other House and Senate members have also have their own independent contractors, including "consultants" instead of, or in addition to, full-time employees.

Among them are House Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan) who has a monthly contract of \$2,500 with former House speaker Heinz Hofschneider starting in September. The Senate leadership also hired former lieutenant governor Diego Benavente on a \$2,300 consultancy contract mainly on the fiscal year 2011 budget. *(Haidee V. Eugenio)*

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# NMC approves retraining program for former students

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**  
moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College Board of Regents has adopted a new policy that will provide free education and training to former students who still need further education and training related to

their courses—as determined by their employers.

Under the new “program guarantee” policy, the college will offer education and training designed to enable students to acquire entry-level vocational/technical skills necessary to enter the workforce.

NMC will guarantee free tuition for up to eight credits of retraining under the condition that the employer certifies that the student lacks the target job skills normally expected of an entry-level employee who has graduated from an equivalent vocational/technical program.

To be eligible for retraining, a student must have graduated from NMC with an associate in science or associate in applied science degree, or baccalaureate degree in education.

Bobbie Merfalen, dean of Academic Programs and Services, told *Saipan Tribune* that

the new policy will take effect in the spring 2012 semester and that the academic council will finalize the procedures and mechanisms soon.

She said this is a first time for the college to implement such a policy. “It’s our way of creating a positive image of our college

and to tell people that we stand by for what we produced,” she said.

She said the policy could be likened to a product that, when bought by a consumer, contains specific guarantees from the manufacturer.

“If defective products and items have a return policy, NMC has its own program guarantee policy,” she said.

In order to be eligible for the program, the employer must justify that its employee lacks some basic training in the field he or she is working on.

Because the policy covers free education and training for up to eight credits, the savings will be substantial for beneficiaries, Merfalen said. NMC charges students \$95 per credit.

NMC president Sharon Y. Hart is pleased with the policy’s adoption. “I am very pleased that NMC is now offering a program guarantee. This guarantee speaks highly of the fact that the college is publicly endorsing the quality of all of our courses that lead to a degree,” she said, adding that both students and employers will benefit from this new venture.



CLARISSA V. DAVID

## Hyatt steps up to the plate with toy donation

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**  
clarissa\_david@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Children under the care of Karidat’s Guma Esperanza, the CNMI’s shelter for victims of domestic violence and human trafficking, will benefit from about 70 toys that Hyatt Regency Saipan employees donated for the Toys for Tots program.

Hyatt general manager Nick Nishikawa led staffers in presenting the wrapped toys to Karidat executive director Angie Guerrero, shelter manager Lauri Ogumoro, and

other Karidat staff in a brief ceremony at the hotel lobby yesterday.

“It is in opening each gift that we send joy to each child that benefits from this toy drive. I want to take this opportunity to thank each Hyatt associate that showed overwhelming support toward this worthwhile cause,” said Nishikawa.

Children who have been served or are still being sheltered at the Guma Esperanza this year range in ages from a few months to 17 years old.

“This is such a wonderful gift to the children and families served by Guma Esperanza,” Ogumoro said, adding that Hyatt has been a strong supporter of their toy drive. “We’re blessed by this strong relationship with Hyatt.”

According to Ogumoro, the gifts will be presented to the children’s parents today, giving these parents the opportunity to personally hand them to their children. She said they will host a gathering for the families at the shelter on Friday so they can celebrate the

holidays.

“We wish for an island free of domestic violence. May God bless us all in that endeavor,” said Ogumoro.

Karidat’s Guerrero thanked the Hyatt “for their thoughtfulness in coming up with this toy drive.”

Guerrero pointed out that the toy drive also was an opportunity for Hyatt employees to teach their children and grandchildren about generosity, especially to those who are less fortunate. “That’s a very valuable lesson to learn from

Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Nick Nishikawa and hotel staff join volunteers and staff of Karidat’s Guma Esperanza, led by Karidat executive director Angie Guerrero and shelter manager Lauri Ogumoro, for a group photo after donating some 70 toys yesterday.

an early age.”

Guerrero is pleased that children at the shelter will be opening presents on Christmas and have something to be happy about. “Despite the economy being so hard, people still have the desire to care and share with other people.”

## Woman gets 8 days for smashing car’s windshields

A woman who smashed the windshields of her boyfriend’s car pleaded guilty to criminal mischief as part of a plea deal and was sentenced yesterday to eight days in prison.

Superior Court associate judge David A. Wiseman sentenced Amanda O. Kaipat, 23, to a year in prison, all suspended except for eight days, with credit for the eight days she had already served in jail; that means she immediately goes free.

The Office of the Attorney General had charged Kaipat with disturbing the peace and criminal mischief. She agreed to the plea deal; the criminal mischief charge was dropped.

Kaipat will be placed on probation for a year and required to pay a \$100 fine, and \$25 court assessment fee. She was also required to pay restitution to the victim and to attend anger management classes.

Kaipat broke the front and rear windshields of Christopher R. Dela Cruz’s car on Nov. 1, 2011, on Saipan in an alleged fit of jealousy. The car was parked in front of an apartment in Chalan Kanoa.

Last March, Kaipat sustained multiple injuries after Dela Cruz allegedly beat her up and choked her with a PVC pipe at his residence in Kagman.

Dela Cruz, 28, was arrested for assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace. He posted bail. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)



CLARISSA V. DAVID

Members of the Proa Music Society of the Northern Marianas College pose with some of the clients at the Aging Center after their performance yesterday morning.

## NMC music club take their turn with the *man’amko*

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**  
clarissa\_david@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Proa Music Society of the Northern Marianas College took its turn yesterday to serenade the *man’amko* at the Aging Center with classic Christmas carols.

Twelve members of NMC’s only chartered music club performed rollicking versions of Christmas hits such as *Feliz Navidad*, *Jingle Bell Rock*, and *Last Christmas*. The island’s

elderly clapped and sang along, with some swaying to the beat, including Pacita Angeles, a client at the Center for five years.

Proa Music Society president Amber Mendiola said it was the group’s first time to perform for the *man’amko*. She said the group, formed in September 2010, practiced for about two weeks in time for yesterday’s presentation.

The group was also at the KKMP radio station earlier that day and was scheduled to play

another set at Joeten Susupe following their Aging Center performance.

Mendiola said their group chose to sing lively songs to get the *man’amko* engaged.

“It feels very heartwarming because a lot of the music we did, they really appreciated it. It was nice to see them get into the Christmas spirit by clapping their hands and dancing to the tunes,” she told *Saipan Tribune*.

The group enjoyed it so much that a tradition may have been

born. Mendiola said that performing for the *man’amko* every year is a possibility. “Hopefully next time, there would be more students participating in this activity,” she added.

Dean Borja, a Hospitality major at NMC, said it was a great feeling spreading Christmas cheer to the senior citizens.

“I hope they have a great Christmas and a happy New Year. God bless every *man’amko* out there in the world,” said Borja, who is also

the lead singer for the local band Latte Vibes.

Jacoba Asuncion, a client at the center for about eight years, became an instant fan. “I wish they could come every year. They did a very good job,” she said.

Saipan Seniors Advisory Council chair Teresita Sorroza, for her part, said, “We’re very grateful that the Proa group wanted to cheer us and wish us merry Christmas. We wish the same for them.”



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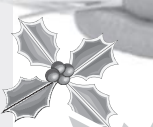
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Ofisinan I Gubietno  
Dipáttamenton I Tano’ Pupbliku

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public lands in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

- i. The proposed lease of public land is described as Lot No. 047 L 02, containing an area of approximately 49,000 square meters, more or less, situated in Naftan, Saipan. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands for inspection.
- ii. The prospective lessee is Eco Island Development, LLC. The Members of the Limited Liability Company are Mr. Herman P. Sablan and Ms. Shen Yen.
- iii. The proposed lease was negotiated by Mr. Herman P. Sablan.
- iv. The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of developing and managing a solar photovoltaic power plant.  
  
The term of the proposed lease agreement is 25 years, with an option to extend the lease for an additional 15 years.  
  
The proposed annual rental during the term is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property.
- v. A copy of the proposed lease agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; Songsong Village, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.
- vi. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in Naftan, Saipan.
- vii. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before January 5, 2012 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

NUTISIA PUT MAPROPONIN INEKSTENDIN INATKILON TANU' PUPBLIKU

Sigun gi Seksiona 106(b) gi Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i Dipattamentun Tānu’ Pupbliku guini ha nā’i nutisia ni intension-ña para u mana’ma’atkila pumalu na tānu' pupbliku siha giya Saipan, Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islas Marianas siha. Maseha hāyi na pattida siha gi halum i pupbliki henerát siña ha na'hálum i imfotmasion, opiñon, pat testamoñun kinentra siha gi tinahguin propositu siha ni para i atkilon tānu' pupbliku. Sigi mās mo'na mapribeniya ginin i Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i tinattitiyi pettanesin imfotmasion ni madimānda ni debi na u mapupblika.

- i. I maproponi na atkilon tānu’ pupbliku ha diskribi kumu Lot No. Lot No. 047 L 02, ni kinonsisti āria kāsī guaaha 49,000 square meters, mās pat menus, ni gaigi giya Naftan, Saipan. I kopian i lugát gaigi gi pumalu na gumuaha gi Dipattamentun Tānu' Pupbliku siha ni para i rikunosimientu.
- ii. I manatikikila i Eco Island Development, LCC. I miembru siha gi Liability Company si Siñot Herman P. Sablan yan si Siñora Shen Yen.
- iii. I maproponi na atkilon manigosiu gi as Siñot Herman P. Sablan.
- iv. I manatikikila debi na u kuntuha umusa i lugát siha uniku para i hinangai adilāntu yan minanehan solar photovoltaic power plant.  
  
I teman i maproponi na kuntrátan atkilon sa’ 25 āñus, yan option para u ma’ekstendi i atkilon gi ta’lu 15 āñus.  
  
I maproponi na āpas atkilon gi sakkan gi durāntin i tema sigun gi percentage gi appraised fair market value gi propiedát.
- v. Kopian i manmaproponi na kontrátan atkilon siña machuli' gi ufisinan i Dipattamentun Tānu' Pupbliku siha, gaigi gi sigundu bibienda 2nd floor gi Joeten Dandan Commercial Building giya Dandan, Saipan; gi Songsong Village, Luta; pat i primet 1st bibienda gi Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.
- vi. I Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbliku siha tāya' na ha risibi tinahguin propositu siha para sinuhetun atkilon tanu' pupbliku siha giya Naftan, Saipan.
- vii. I Sekritāriun i Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbliku siha debi na u aksepta i tinigi' i imfotmasion, opiñon yan testamoñun kinentra pat tinahguin propositu siha ginin i manggai interes na pattida siha gi pat āntis di Ineru (January) 5, 2012 gi ufisinan Dipattamentun Tānu' Pupbliku siha ni gaigi Saipan, Luta, pat Tinian.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL AKKILONUL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sángi Tálil ye 106(b) mellól Alléghul Toulap 15-2, Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap, ekke atotoowow ammataf igha ebwe akkilaaló eghús falúw mellól Seipel, Commonwealth Téél Falúwasch Marianas. Schóókka remuschál emwal rebwe isisilong yaar mángemáng , data awewee, me angiingi reel pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap. Sengi Alléghul Toulap ye 15-2, ewwal ayoora, lamal awewee kka rebwe mweiti ngáli milikka ebwe akkatééló.

- i. Pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap nge ekke bwaári Lot No. 047 L 02 ebwe yoor faaigh me tiwoow saangaras lapal (49,000 square meters) elapeló me ngáre eghús, elo Naftan, Seipel. Tilighial bwuley yeel nge eyoor mereel Bwulasiyool Falúweer Toulap (Public Lands) ngáre óubwe ghuley fischiy.
- ii. Schéschéél schóól akkilón nge Eco Islands Development, LLC. Membrol Limited Liability Company yeel nge Mr. Herman P. Sablan me Ms. Shen Yen.
- iii. Schóól aweweey akkilon yel nge Mr. Herman P. Sablan.
- iv. Schóól akkilon ebwe yááyá falúw yeel rel ebwe ayoora me mwóghutagheli solar photovoltaic power plant.  
  
Tool aighúghúl pomwol akkilon nge reweigh me limoow ráágh (25 years). Emmwel rebwe bwal sóóbwey ngáli seigh me limoow ráágh (15 years).  
  
Pomwol méél akkilon lól ráágh kka re akkilali nge ebwe mwiril sángi percentage il yaal appraised fair market value il falúw.  
  
Tilighial akkilon yeel nge emmwel óubwe bwughi merel bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap, elo aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building llól Tuturam, Seipél; Songsong village, Luuta; me ngáre mmwal pwó (1st floor) mellól Kings Commercial Building, Tchúlúyól.
- v. Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge esáál bweibwogh mwo pomwol akkilon ye elo Naftan, Seipél.
- vi. Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge ebwe bwughi ischil mángemáng, aingiingil merel amweyút mmwal Eneero (January) 5, 2012 mellól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipél, Luuta, Tchúlúyól.

Christmas in the Marianas spreads cheer

Hundreds of revelers gathered in downtown Garapan, Saipan on Saturday, Dec. 17, to share holiday glad-tidings at the Marianas Visitors Authority’s 10th Annual Christmas in the Marianas celebration.

The event kicked off with a Christmas Walk along the Saipan Beach Pathway, sponsored by the Marianas Walking Association. Just before sunset, a parade of floats and walking groups was held through the downtown tourist district on Beach Road to the American Memorial Park.

For their clever use of natural and recycled material, as well as live island dancers and wafting ukulele music, Kagman Elementary School won first place in the float competition. In second place was Dandan Elementary School, followed by Cha-cha Oceanview Jr. High School, and Green Meadows School.

Six schools presented holiday songs to an enthusiastic crowd in the caroling competition at the American Memorial Park, with Koblerville Elementary School taking the top slot for the second year in a row. The KES Glee Club impressed judges with their pitch-perfect performance in several languages, live instruments, well-coordinated choreography, and festive costumes. Koblerville was followed by Dandan Elementary School, Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School, and San Vicente Elementary School.

For the first time, junior and senior high schools joined the festivities, with Kagman High School walking away with the top prize for their medley of long-standing island holiday favorites. Cha-cha Oceanview Junior High School finished in second.

“The holiday spirit demonstrated by the students this year was very uplifting, and we’re pleased at the success of this year’s 10th anniversary celebration of Christmas in the Marianas,” said MVA Community Projects manager Martin Duenas. “Both residents and visitors were able to enjoy the parade and the caroling, which is our purpose in staging this celebration each year.”

All the winners received cash prizes for their efforts. Other event sponsors included the Public School System, IT&E, DFS, the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Public Works, National Parks Service, Marianas Tourism Education Council, Carolinian-Chamorro Cultural Village, Inc., Team PDI, Integrity Communication, KKMP, Pacific Trading Co. and Top Development Inc. *(MVA)*

Flashback  
A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Dec. 22, 2000

CPA's hand in economic dev't lauded

The Strategic Economic Development Council has commended the Commonwealth Ports Authority’s efforts in cutting back airport charges, which strengthened the CNMI’s competitiveness as a prime tourist destination. Bob Jones, chairman of the SEDC committee on air service initiative, said CPA’s earlier decision to rollback charges at the Saipan International Airport makes it easier to sell the CNMI as a destination to airline companies. “We were looking for major factors that would make existing airlines to continue servicing the islands and entice new carriers to come in. CPA’s decision is a great contribution to the overall efforts,” said Jones.

Economic plan promises bright future for CNMI

With a concrete economic blueprint now in the bag, the CNMI government anticipates to generate an additional \$200 million revenues in a four-year period through the revitalization of the islands’ tourism industry. Following 15 months of discussions, the Strategic Economic Development Council yesterday unveiled a blueprint seen to alleviate the Commonwealth’s financial woes through aggressive marketing and physical improvements. The Council presented the first phase of its economic recommendations to Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday, where SEDC Chair Scott Bowman, who is also the regional manager for Duty Free Shoppers, emphasized the advantages of a tourism-based economy for the Commonwealth.

Dec. 22, 2002

Kumoi bats for fewer controls on non-commercial fishing

Sen. Ramos S. Guerrero introduced legislation that seeks to allow non-commercial net fishing in the Northern Marianas, provided the harvests are intended for personal or immediate family consumption. The proposed measure-Senate Bill 13-118-is Guerrero’s answer to the Department of Lands and Natural Resources’ proposal to ban certain types of net fishing in the CNMI. The agency is pushing for the moratorium in a bid to protect the CNMI’s diminishing fishery resources. SB 13-118 seeks to amend Section 6(e) of Public Law 12-12 to clarify the scope of the DLNR’s authority to promulgate regulations that will better secure marine conservation areas.

Discussion venue for education issues mulled

The House of Representatives is planning to coordinate an open forum for members of the public education community, where pertinent educational issues may be tackled constructively. The lower House is spearheading the forum in a bid to provide a neutral venue where Public School System and Board of Education officials, as well as teachers and parents, can air their sentiments without fear of retaliation. Speaker Heinz S. Hofschneider said the invitation will be extended to everyone, but warned would-be participants not to take the discussions into a “personal” level. “It is always a good rule to remind everybody that the easiest and quickest thing to do in life is to criticize. I’d like to suggest to everyone to criticize constructively,” the Speaker pointed out.

Dec. 22, 2003

NMIRF investments hit \$358M in Nov.

The NMI Retirement Fund’s international investments grew to \$358.16 million in November-an increase of about \$4.597 million from October’s \$353.56 million, according to Fund administrator Karl T. Reyes in last Friday’s Board of Trustees meeting. Though a mere 1.3 percent increase over October’s investment performance, Reyes said that, if the market value of the Fund’s portfolio were deposited in a bank, the \$4.597 million earnings are equivalent to an interest rate of 15.82 percent. This is also the first time that the Fund’s portfolio reached this high since 2001. Reyes attributed the meteoric rise in the Fund’s portfolio to the robust market that has continued its bullish streak since the middle of this year.

Fund, MPLA sign land lease contract

The NMI Retirement Fund and the Marianas Public Lands Authority have signed a land lease contract for a piece of land adjacent to the NMIRF building that would be used as a parking lot for the Fund’s clients and employees. The piece of land-located southeast of the Fund building-measures about 2,500 sqm and would be leased by the Fund for five years, at a cost of \$5,800 per year.

# Guam Army National Guard may deploy fewer soldiers

There may be fewer Guam Army National Guard soldiers from the 1-294<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment to deploy in 2013 to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, according to Maj. Gen. Benny M. Paulino, the Adjutant General of the Guam National Guard.

A reported change or can-

cellation of a pending mobilization for majority of the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team was recently announced by the Hawaii Army National Guard. The 1-294<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, as well as the F Company, 29<sup>th</sup> Support Battalion, are both organic units under the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

"The change or cancellation of the pending mobilization definitely affects our deployment. All indicators are that our mission is still intact, although it does look like our numbers may be reduced to up to about two-thirds of the approximately

850 soldiers who were originally slated to deploy," Paulino said. "This is all preliminary and things could change or the mission may remain on course."

If the size of the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team is reduced for the mobilization, the

remaining units will be placed in the Contingency Expeditionary Force pool and have been informed to continue with preparations for deployment.

The 1-294<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment is composed of soldiers from Guam and the Commonwealth of

the Northern Mariana Islands.

The 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team received a Notification of Sourcing in April 2011 and the change to this notification was received recently, according to a news release from the Hawaii National Guard. (PR)

## Locally produced TV show premieres Friday

The television premiere of the year has arrived.

A locally produced TV show called *Finu Chamorro* will have its premiere on Friday, Dec. 23, 2011, at the American Memorial Park's Museum Theater.

Produced by Digital Motions' Edwin Sta. Theresa, Kevin Jardinero, and Bernard Rivera as well as Public School System's Lumi Bermudes, *Finu Chamorro* is an attempt to make the CNMI indigenous language more accessible to everyone.

Friday's premiere will begin with the arrival of guests at 5:30pm and the start of the program at 6pm, followed by the showing of two episodes of the TV show, and the end of the premiere at 7pm.

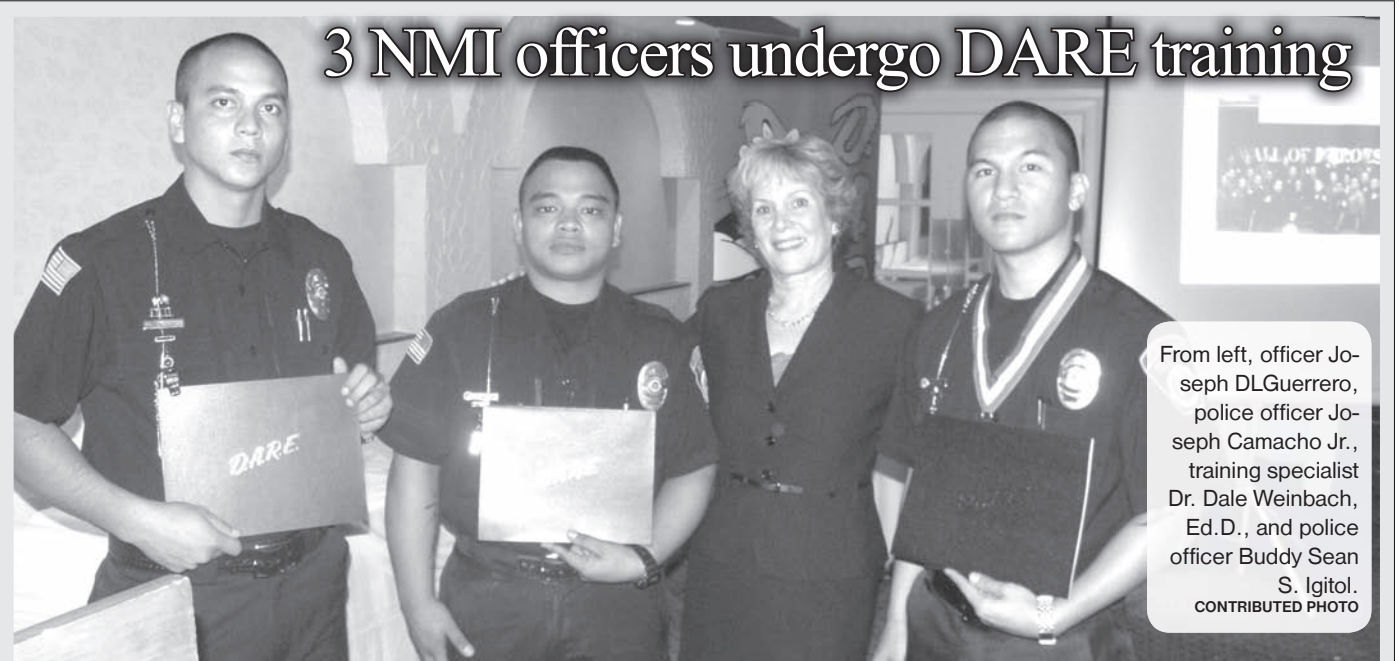
The premiere showing will also be attended by various

representatives of the Public School Systems, parents and students cast in *Finu Chamorro*, and possible private company sponsors.

*Finu Chamorro* isn't just for the indigenous population in the Commonwealth. The season begins with lesson one, so basically anyone wanting to learn the Chamorro language can. It will be done in an easy format with

each lesson organically flowing on to the next. Whether you are married to a Chamorro and want to be able to speak their native language or if you're a student needing to practice, it is for everyone!

Season 1 Episode 1 will be aired on Dec. 26, 27, and 31, from 6:30pm to 7pm, for the Christmas Special on Channel 7, ABC 7. (PR)



From left, officer Joseph DLGuerrero, police officer Joseph Camacho Jr., training specialist Dr. Dale Weinbach, Ed.D., and police officer Buddy Sean S. Igitol. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Three CNMI police officers from Saipan and Rota who are responsible for running the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program in the CNMI recently attended a two-week DARE training in Mahway, New Jersey.

Officers Joseph DLGuerrero of Saipan, Joseph Camacho Jr. of Rota, and Buddy Sean S. Igitol

represented the Commonwealth at the training, which took place from Dec. 5 to 16, under the auspices of DARE New Jersey, Inc.

A total of over 30 attendees from different eastern states were present, some of whom have never heard of Saipan or Rota or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

During their training, they formed different teams, separating the three CNMI officers so that they would get to know their other colleagues. Each team selects a team leader and, at the end, is awarded the Team Leader Award Medal. One medal went to Igitol, a son of Ivan and Marie Salas Igitol.

All throughout their gradua-

tion ceremony, the three were cheered for having come the longest distance and having to endure the time difference.

The DARE program seeks to boost efforts to prevent drug use among teens. The CNMI congratulates these three DARE graduates as they go out and practice what they've acquired during their training. (PR)

## CNMI GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES 2012 Health Insurance Rates

**No Rate Increase  
for 2012**



**New Silver Plus Option**  
available for people with certain  
pre-existing conditions.

**LAST CHANCE! Application deadline is Friday, Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>**

CLASS	ACTIVE GOVT	MEDICAL (Bi-weekly)	MED & DENTAL (Bi-weekly)
Single	<b>STAYWELL</b>	<b>\$65.00</b>	<b>\$91.00</b>
	Aetna High Option	\$100.93	No Dental Plan
	Aetna Low Option	\$ 93.97	No Dental Plan
	<b>StayWell Annual savings = \$934 + Potential Refund of \$ 375</b>		
Couple	<b>STAYWELL</b>	<b>\$130.00</b>	<b>\$182.00</b>
	Aetna High Option	\$206.90	No Dental Plan
	Aetna Low Option	\$191.39	No Dental Plan
	<b>StayWell Annual savings = \$1,999 + Potential Refund of \$ 750</b>		
Family	<b>STAYWELL</b>	<b>\$208.00</b>	<b>\$265.00</b>
	Aetna High Option	\$322.96	No Dental Plan
	Aetna Low Option	\$298.78	No Dental Plan
	<b>StayWell Annual savings = \$2,999 + Potential Refund of \$ 1,236</b>		

### STAYWELL BENEFITS

Member Refund Program  
Common Law Spouses Included  
\*100% coverage for off-island in-patient care

**Out of Pocket Annual Maximum:**  
Single = \$ 1,500; Family = \$4,500

\*Some conditions apply

### AETNA BENEFITS

No Refund Program  
Common Law Spouses Covered at Higher Rates  
70 – 80% coverage for off-island inpatient care

**Out of Pocket Annual Maximums:**  
High Option: Single = \$ 4,000; family = \$ 12,000  
Low Option: Single = \$ 10,000; family = \$ 30,000

# Opinion

Hafa Adair

## Saipan Tribune

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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

### EDITORIAL

## Kim Jong Il and Vaclav Havel: Two leaders a world apart

According to his obituary in the *Los Angeles Times*, North Korean strongman Kim Jong Il hired a personal sushi chef from Tokyo and a personal pizza chef from Italy even as his country suffered through a famine that killed as many as 2 million of his people. He kept a library of 20,000 movies for his own entertainment although ordinary citizens could be sent to prison camps for watching South Korean or American movies. He beat back economic reforms and led North Korea's economy to the brink of collapse while building a nuclear weapons program opposed by the rest of the world. On a trip through Russia, he reportedly had lobster and red wine flown in to meet his train at stops on the way; meanwhile, he banished to prison those deemed disloyal and kept a tight rein on expression and information.

Even if only a part of these stories from defectors and former aides and employees are true, they paint a damning picture of a reclusive leader with an extraordinary lack of empathy, to put it mildly, for the more than 20 million people in his country. But perhaps his brutal rule is not so surprising: Kim Jong Il came to power not because the people chose him or because he had proved himself capable or caring—but because the office was bequeathed to him by his father, who had run the country since it was founded in 1948.

Now contrast Kim with Vaclav Havel, the longtime-dissident-turned-leader of the Czech Republic, who also died over the weekend. Havel trod a very different path to power. A dissident (and poet and playwright) for two decades while Czechoslovakia was under communist rule, he spent five years in prison for challenging the authority of the state. When he was not incarcerated, he lived under constant surveillance by the secret police. He became one of his country's most trusted moral voices, opposing dictatorship and repression at great risk to himself. When communist rule ended, he became president—reluctantly, he said—and led Czechoslovakia and, later, the Czech Republic, for most of the next 14 years.

One doesn't have to side with the right or the left, or praise all of Havel's tenure—or even demonize Kim's every action—to acknowledge the terribly different sorts of leaders they were. Havel helped transform his country, leading it out of one era into another and helping his people reconcile with the past. His popularity rose and fell but few would deny that devotion to his country was what drove him. Kim, not so much.

Freedom and democracy are not the only virtues a nation must possess; citizens have to eat and they need roofs over their heads as well. But the fight against repression and tyranny in favor of self-government and human rights is one that has proved its value time and again. In this fight, Kim stands out as the epitome of the problem, because he elevated his own desires and his hunger for power above the needs of his people. Havel stands out as a leader to emulate.

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## Oh Kim, ye were awful

This might offend some (though not sure who). We could not resist the terrible pun, but give us a couple of minutes, anyway.

One day at SVES, two parents sent excuse slips with their children who skipped school the day before because North Korea was reportedly poised to bomb Guam and Saipan. These parents were professionals who I thought should have known better; they were so convinced about the news that it was terrifying to think of media influence in shaping perception and affecting behavior.

This Saturday when Kim Jong Il of North Korea died, a report was made of a missile launched from DPRK heading for Japan! Two days later, it was still repeated to justify Japan, SoKor, and the U.S. air and naval fleet going into heightened military alert. Of course, the alleged missile was nowhere to be found.

The public display of tears and grief still surprises Western media, cynical over similar occurrence in 1976 when Mao Zedong of China died. Mao was accused of personality cult in Communist Chinese propaganda posters with his poster on display in spite of his decry of the practice as a "poisonous ideological survival of the old society," referring to the long dynastic tradition of the nation, and more recently then, a nod to the Soviet Union's revision of history in the condemnation of Stalin and his policies. No such condemnation was leveled against similar outbreak of grief the year before when Mao's ex-comrade, Chiang Kai-shek of Taiwan, died.

Back to Kim. It is amazing what words we choose to describe the North Korean leader. He is one of the world's five worst dictators, one headline said. *Time* magazine is now working on 28-year-old Kim III—Kim Jong Un, already accused of getting cosmetic surgery to look like his grandpa so that the personality cult continues.

Ferdinand Marcos was called an authoritarian leader, while Chile's Salvador Allende and Cuba's Fidel Castro were/satanic dictators. \$Boy General Augusto Pinochet was dear to the U of Chicago gang that transformed downtown Santiago into an extension of the Windy City's Loop. (When Marcos diplomatically slapped him in the face while the General was heading from Fiji to China with a fueling stopover in the Philippines, he turned around like a spoiled brat and headed back to the Andes; I unknowingly landed from Brazil a few hours after he did, holding a Philippine passport. The airport Interpol was tickled over my ignorance but detained me for half a day for scrutiny nevertheless.) I probably would have faced the firing squad, were Pinochet like North Korea's Kim, my Western colleague's mused. Pinochet was an authoritarian leader to the West while the second Kim who just died is labeled by *Time* magazine, and every respectable Western chronicler, as a dictator!

So why the uncontrolled sobs? The public grief must surely be orchestrated, we speculate, not unlike the paid wailers at an Iberian

By JAIME VERGARA  
Special to the Saipan TribuneJaime R. Vergara (jrvergara2031@aol.com)  
is a former PSS teacher and is currently writing from the campus of Shenyang Aerospace University in China.

wake. We doubt the genuineness of the tear ducts!

Kim in the big picture. Twenty-two percent of Koreans are surnamed Kim. In Yanbian (Korea-in-China), Kim is Jin, and there are tons of them; those familiar with their Chinese history will remember the early Jin dynasty more than a thousand years ago. Later, Jins were northern Jurchens, related to the old Koguryo of what is now northern Manchuria, were ancestors of the Manchus who reigned as the Qing dynasty who were the last landlords to the Hans. The Kims/Jins are related either by blood or by choice.

And here lies the deep cleavage that separates two fundamental understandings of the human mask. The Asian "face" projects harmony and unity sustained, maintained, and preserved at all cost. Its equilibrium relies on trusted authority. The occidental mask values the rights of self-hood, the virtue of self-expression, Greco-Roman "persona" displayed. Since 1776 in America, the individual's right has become paramount, to be defended by all means necessary. After Hitler, individuals with strong followers are suspect. It makes automatons of followers who surrender their persona to the leader!

We sneer at DPRK's official depiction of Kim II born on Baektul while the elder was fighting the Japanese, when in fact he was born in the Soviet Union earlier. An aspect of mythical story telling is its non-adherence to historical fact. Just take Freud's nephew Edward Bernays' PR work (the art of public manipulation) on Park Avenue. Kim II was a serious and consummate practitioner of the art.

Of course, we do not do that, right? It is Christmas. Jesus the Christian Messiah was born in a manger in Bethlehem on Dec. 25, right? Conceived sans physical contact, sustained in the freedom of the desert wind (aka Holy Spirit), and no less a regal descendant of King David!

The PR stuff is child's play. It is when we allow our fear of the alien and unfamiliar to make us trigger-happy on land, in the air and sea-lanes that we shake in our shoes. Let us keep the missiles at bay, have Kim III and all the Kims/Jins mourn the passing of kin without having to glance over their shoulders to check our smile and sneer.

It would not hurt for us to sing, "Oh Kim, we are awful, too!" Ah one, ah two!

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com); or through our website at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com).

## Christmas presence

In a few days children will wake up with glee to open presents underneath the Christmas tree. The anticipation that has been building up for weeks will come to an end with wrapping paper scattered throughout the house and batteries inserted into high-tech toys that would make Thomas Edison blush with envy.

As a young child I can remember the difficulty of going to bed on Christmas Eve, as I thought about my wish list of presents I had picked out from the huge Sears catalog. At the break of dawn I would wake up and quietly sneak into the living room to see all the colorfully wrapped presents under the lit tree, and I would look for my name on the largest boxes, hoping they were mine.

What made that one day particularly exciting was the build-up toward Christmas from the traditions that have been handed down for generations. The Christmas cards, songs, decorations, and food were all part of the ambiance that got people into the season of giving. Christmas has become a worldwide celebration for Christians and non-Christians alike. Sometimes it is difficult to make the distinction because both celebrate similar themes publicly and in their homes.

As I've transitioned from believing in Santa Claus to being Santa Claus, I have tried to examine what really makes this season so special for anyone who celebrates it. Traditions are an important part of any celebration, and the giving of gifts has become essential, but what is it that really makes the season so memorable?

In my opinion it is the presence, and not the presents that makes this time so wonderful. Christmas tends to bring people together

in a way that rarely happens at any other time of the year. People bond through the giving of gifts, the sharing of food, and the parties and personal moments that cause friends and family to enjoy one another even more. It's a time to put personal biases and petty differences aside and look at our commonalities as brothers and sisters of the human family.

By becoming present in the moment to the needs of others and showing our concern and sharing our time, talent, or gifts with them, we become better people and help to make the world a better place to live in. Christmas is a time to look deeply inside ourselves and examine how we fit with the world outside ourselves, and realize that we may not be able to change the world, but we can make sure people knew we were present.

One way to let others know you were present is to focus more on the moments, rather than the money. Think about your most memorable moments from Christmas past and in most cases it will be filled with the presence of loved ones versus the presents from loved ones. Yes, there are memorable times when you received that extra special gift that stands distinctly out in your mind. However, it was also having someone present to share the moment that made it so special. (Try playing Rock'em Sock'em Robots by yourself.)

The presents act as a catalyst to bring people together and share more of their presence. Having one without the other greatly diminishes the moment. This is especially apparent when loved ones are not present due to geographical distance, work demands, health issues, or military service. The presents they give are a minor substitute for their physical presence that is sorely missed.

This Christmas we will be sharing our presents with all of our children, but as our family has grown and some of the children moved

By **RIK VILLEGAS**

*Special to the Tribune*

*Rik coaches businesses through their most challenging transition points to develop consistently profitable businesses that operate without them. He can be contacted at [RikVillegas@gmail.com](mailto:RikVillegas@gmail.com), and you can comment on this article at <http://rikv.blogspot.com>.*



to different parts of the world, we will be missing the presence of four of our children and three grandchildren. One joyous event we will particularly delight in is the reunion of our oldest son Joshua, his wife April, and their two children. It will be beyond words for us to welcome them to Saipan for the first time and to share our presence with each other in a way that will hopefully be remembered as a special moment in all our lives.

As you open your presents on Christmas, remember that it was because of the intense love of a Father who was willing to give the presence of his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, that we truly celebrate this day. His greatest gift will not be anything that can be wrapped with a bow, but the opportunity for true believers to enjoy His eternal presence. However you decide to celebrate the season with your presence, I want to wish you and your loved ones a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:5*

## Modern-day Scrooges should learn the lesson of 'A Christmas Carol'

By **KENNETH R. PERES**  
PROGRESSIVE MEDIA PROJECT

If Charles Dickens were alive today, he'd have no trouble recognizing modern-day Scrooges.

Just like the old Scrooge, the corporate Scrooges of today are hoarding their wealth rather than helping to create general prosperity. Corporations are sitting on a record \$2 trillion in profits but refuse to bring investment, employment, wages and benefits back to pre-recession levels. Instead, corporate executives are spending billions on their own compensation and \$445 billion to buy back the stock of their own companies.

Just like the old Scrooge, the corporate Scrooges want austerity for the many and prosperity for the few. For instance, over the last three years, Verizon earned \$21.5 billion in U.S. pre-tax profits and gave \$181 million to its top five executives. But it eliminated 40,000 jobs and is demanding \$1 billion in concessions from its 45,000 union-represented workers—an average \$22,000 cut per worker.

Just like the old Scrooge, the corporate Scrooges have been confronted with the consequences of their actions. They have been challenged by the spirits of economic crises past (Great Depression), present (the Great Recession) and Future (an impending Great Stagnation).

These spirits teach us the causes of economic crises: the massive transfer of income to the top 1 percent; the unregulated use of deposits in financial institutions for wildly speculative schemes rather than investment in production; cuts in government investment, spending and employment; and cuts in workers' wages and benefits.

However, the old Scrooge—unlike the corporate Scrooges—paid attention to the lessons taught by the spirits of the past, present and future. He transformed himself into the "New Scrooge" by understanding the consequences of his actions. The old Scrooge saw his worker as a cost to be minimized. The new Scrooge provided a living wage with good benefits, "I'll raise your salary and endeavor to assist your struggling family."

The old Scrooge had the goal of accumulating and hoarding his wealth. The new Scrooge had the goal of shared prosperity and recognized the importance of providing direct assistance to all those in need, "to think of people below... as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys."

We should take the same two steps as the new Scrooge: Provide decent wages, benefits and respect for all workers and a social safety net for all those in need.

By implementing such policies, we will put into practice the economic lesson Dickens taught us in "A Christmas Carol": that each of us will be better off when all of us are better off. Prosperity for the 100 percent is surely better than austerity for the 99 percent.

*Kenneth E. Peres is an economist with the Communications Workers of America. He wrote this for Progressive Media Project, a source of liberal commentary on domestic and international issues; it is affiliated with The Progressive magazine.*

## Letters to the Editor

### More clarifications, please!

Usually when one makes a presentation to an audience, the level of interest and retention are washed out in a matter of minutes. I often wonder how much of our Commissioner of Public Safety's messages to the Rotary Club of Saipan at a recent luncheon meeting were still remembered by those present. It is good to put this issue aside for another time as this kind of outcome crop up often in presentations by other government officials.

This idea about "Community Policing" that our commissioner described would have been helpful if he spent some useful time explaining and defining what this is all about. Is this a "precept" or "concept" he has total familiarity and experienced with? Or is this one of those usual rhetoric and public speaking double talk often employed by one trying to justify ones jurisdictional turf?

It seems that the commissioner is telling the CNMI community that something is not working well in DPS. I expect that as the case in point

but if I do not know what gap is between what is in DPS and the value of target outcomes that are the benchmarks for processes or procedures, then how am I to know what the commissioner is talking about? This is just the state of affairs of where we are now at DPS. Now he is introducing projects and programs such as a "police reserve," "community policing," "database search," and others. How did all these come about? Was there an assessment of some sort that led to all these? This is looking more like a shotgun strategy, hoping that something would stick if the blast hits the moving target.

The commissioner noted that state policing is changing; I agree with him on this. But how are they changing? Changes must come as a result of fast-changing social, economic, and political landscape, he said. How so? How does this broad hindsight fit the fight against crime and fear about crime of the NMI community?

Where is the commissioner taking us in the fight against crime? Is

the infrastructure of DPS fully equipped to sustain the level of initiatives, strategies, and plan elements that follow carefully considered undertaking? Or is this a process of making the right choices: dumping what doesn't work, fixing latent defects of existing elements, or dismissing fads that come along the way only because one reads about it in journals or the commissioner heard in passing?

The DPS is exempted by the austerity policy of the CNMI government. The commissioner must always bear in mind that the mentality of the general CNMI public may not be receptive to the idea of farming out policing work to the community. This is another ball of wax to contend with and he should take all the time to map out this virgin area of policing that involves the community. Until we can get some clear understanding of what steps the commissioner is thinking along this line, there is no way that something like this magnitude and virgin undertaking would result in progressive and assured outcome.

**Francisco R. Agulto**

*Chalan Kanoa, Saipan*

## Messed up

Why is that our own people couldn't get a job while outsiders are the ones fixing the roads? I visited Saipan back in August of this year and I noticed that a lot of our men couldn't get a job even if they're capable of doing what these foreign workers are doing now. It seems that the government is so messed up because they'd rather see our own people living on the street or have each individual beg for a job so they can support their families to survive. You wonder why poverty is rapidly rising but it is because of our officials' ignorance and their freaking prides to admit and face our people to apologize for their mistakes and fix it. Everyone who works in government is getting richer because they are ripping off their own people and the poor are just getting poorer.

**Adelina Arriola Ibanez**  
*Montgomery, Maryland*

## Thank you

On behalf of myself, Keith Nabors, and the Team ZengZung fighters from Tinian, un dangkulo na si yu'us ma'ase to these individuals who have been extremely supportive in helping the sport of mixed martial arts grow on Tinian. It is because of you that we are able to bring out amazing performances from our Tinian fighters and we recognize that without your support, we could have not performed with the excellence we displayed. Thank you for your trust and faith in keeping and continuing to keep the MMA sport alive here on our islands and especially on Tinian. Without further ado, the people who helped make it happen were:

■ Justis "Cuki" Alvarez, Trench Tech Inc.

- Tinian and Aguiguan Mayor Raymond T. Dela Cruz
- Rep. Trenton B. Conner
- Senate Vice President Jude U. Hofschneider
- Sen. Frank Q. Cruz
- Sen. Henry H. San Nicolas
- Frank "The Crank" Camacho
- Josh Castro-ZengZung Inc.
- Star Marianas, most especially Shaun Christian






**Keith Nabors**

*Team ZengZung Fight Club  
Jones Beach, Tinian*

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

# The Weather

## 5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°

### Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲ 85 ▼ 78
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲ 86 ▼ 77
Yap	Showers	▲ 87 ▼ 78
Chuuk	Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 84 ▼ 78
Kosrae	Showers	▲ 84 ▼ 78
Majuro	Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 79

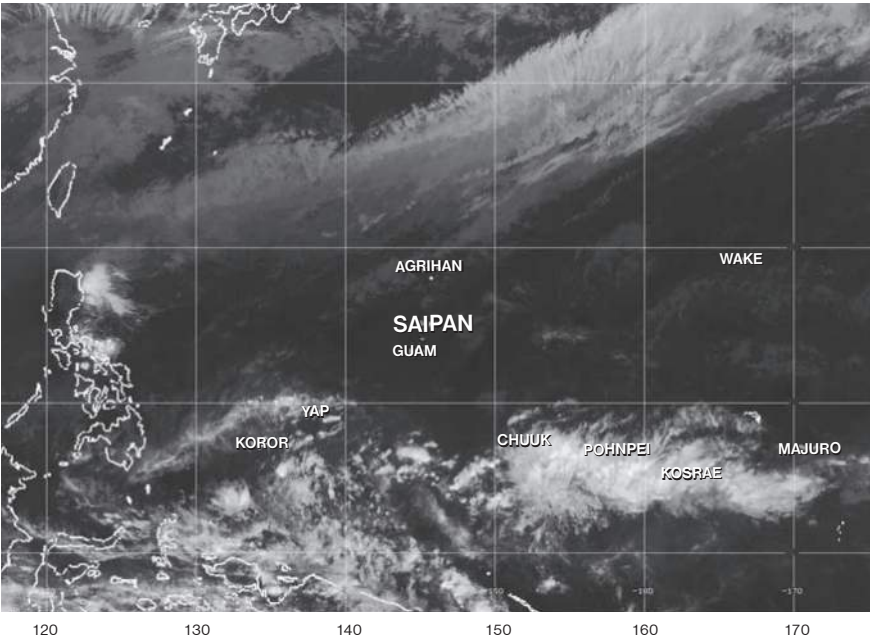
### Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲ 67 ▼ 60
Beijing	Sunny	▲ 36 ▼ 17
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲ 66 ▼ 56
Honolulu	Windy	▲ 81 ▼ 72
London	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 51 ▼ 50
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲ 62 ▼ 44
Manila	Thundershowers	▲ 87 ▼ 78
Melbourne	Sunny	▲ 81 ▼ 59
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲ 81 ▼ 72
New York	Rain	▲ 56 ▼ 46
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 51 ▼ 39
Paris	Cloudy	▲ 50 ▼ 46
Pusan	Windy	▲ 36 ▼ 22
Rome	Windy	▲ 51 ▼ 38
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲ 43 ▼ 27
San Francisco	Sunny	▲ 63 ▼ 43
Seoul	Sunny	▲ 24 ▼ 15
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 53 ▼ 38
Washington, DC	Rain	▲ 60 ▼ 48

### Tides

Saipan Harbor			
6:23 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
11:13 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
4:33 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet

### Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2011  
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A stationary front extends southwestward from east of Minami Tori Shima at 25N158E to beyond 130E at 19N. Extensive cloudiness and patchy rain are found along and north of this boundary to beyond 25N. A surface trough heads northward from 1N137E to Yap. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are present south of Koror and Yap within 175 miles of a line from 2N132E to 6N144E. Another surface trough reaches northward from EQ154E to 8N154E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring just south of Chuuk and Pohnpei within 150 miles of a line from 6N152E to 5N158E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers over Kosrae and just south of Majuro within 120 miles of a line from 5N160E to 4N170E to 7N180.

### Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:38 AM	5:52 PM
Friday	6:39 AM	5:53 PM
Saturday	6:39 AM	5:53 PM
Sunday	6:40 AM	5:54 PM
Monday	6:40 AM	5:54 PM

### Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:43 AM	3:24 PM
Friday	4:47 AM	4:23 PM
Saturday	5:49 AM	5:24 PM
Sunday	6:48 AM	6:26 PM
Monday	7:43 AM	7:26 PM

## GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

- PICTURES**
  - ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
  - BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
  - BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
  - SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
  - TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS**
  - COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

### REQUIREMENTS

- For pictures:**
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
  - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
  - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
  - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
  - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

### HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com) or [jayvee\\_vallejera@saipantribune.com](mailto:jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com).
  - Fax: (670) 235-3740
  - Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
  - Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2011

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)				ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5	C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)				ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5	C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
C05070	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP	C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7	C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily	C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7	C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6	C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6	C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL287	6:00am	8:35am	Daily	DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL297	4:35pm	7:20pm	Daily	DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1	OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily	OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7	OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)				GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6	3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN	OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM	C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT	C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM	PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM	C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau	C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN	C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM				
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM				
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN	OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	1, 2, 4, 6 via ICN
C05076/179	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM	OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN	OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana				ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)			

## FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 1750	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



## NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- \*11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at [www.nmicrimestoppers.com](http://www.nmicrimestoppers.com)

# Grace Christian Ministry serenade the *man'amko* with carols

By CLARISSA V. DAVID  
clarissa\_david@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Members of the Ministry of Grace Christian Assembly spread holiday cheer at the Aging Center Tuesday afternoon by singing several Christmas carols for the *man'amko*.

Worship leader Alain Nuñez led some 25 members young and old on this community outreach.

Nuñez said in a phone interview that Tuesday's visit to the elderly also involved him sharing the message of Christmas and meaningful Biblical scriptures.

The scriptures Nuñez shared were Isaiah 9:6, which talks about the birth of a child who "shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father," and John 3:16, which talks about God's love for the world "that He gave



The island's *man'amko* pose with members of the Ministry of Grace Christian Assembly during visit at the Aging Center on Tuesday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

According to Nuñez, vis-

its to the *man'amko* are usually led by the Grace Christian Academy but this time the ministry spearheaded the activity.

Nuñez said they gave each of the senior citizens Christian mugs, bookmarks, and cookies.

"The visit was very enlight-

ening," Nuñez told *Saipan Tribune*. "We were very excited and felt accomplished to share the Gospel of God and sing Christmas carols to the

*man'amko*."

Aging program coordinator Walter Manglona said they appreciate the Ministry of Grace Christian Assembly for spending time with the *man'amko*.

Manglona believes that Christmas is not just about gift giving. "It's about being remembered. Ultimately, the reason for the season is Jesus. It's the day He was born so there's so much more to it. It's a special reminder that God loves us all."

According to Manglona, visits to the center send a positive message to the island's elderly. "We know times are tough for everybody and so we need this positive message now more than ever," he added.

## Delay OK'd in trial of Guam resident who allegedly impregnated a minor

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood has ordered a delay in the trial of a Guam resident who is facing charges of impregnating a minor on Rota due to the illness of the prosecution's expert witness.

The trial of 49-year-old Melvin David Diaz will now begin on Feb. 6, 2012, to give time for the U.S. government's Texas-based DNA expert to recover from a speech problem brought on by Bell's palsy.

The jury trial was originally set for Dec. 27, 2011.

Assistant U.S. attorney Clyde Lemons Jr. had asked

the court to postpone the trial for at least six weeks due to the unexpected medical condition of Dr. Wayne L. Hoffman.

Hoffman is manager and associate laboratory director at Orchid Cellmark, Inc. Dallas Laboratory, Farmers Branch, Texas. Orchid Cellmark Inc. is reportedly accredited to conduct DNA testing in paternity and other types of relationship testing.

Lemons said that failure to grant their request for continuance will likely "result in a miscarriage of justice."

Lemons said that Hoffman will testify as to why the DNA testing performed by

his laboratory leads him to conclude that the infant born to the victim in this case is the child of Diaz.

Diaz is charged with three counts of enticement of a minor and one count of travel with intent to engage in illicit

sexual conduct.

According to the indictment, between Aug. 1, 2010 and Sept. 30, 2010, Diaz

traveled to the CNMI for the purpose of engaging in illicit sex with the minor. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)



**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY  
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID  
ITB12-DLNR/DFW-024**

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: JANUARY 12, 2012 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"LEASE OF AN OFFICE SPACE FOR THE DEPT. OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES, DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE - ROTA BRANCH"**


COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

**THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, THE LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.**

THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH CNMI PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A) - (D).

/S/ ARNOLD I. PALACIOS  
ACTING SECRETARY OF DLNR

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN  
DIRECTOR, P&S



**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY  
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID  
ITB12-DLNR/SWCD-033**

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: JANUARY 19, 2012 • TIME: 10:30 A.M.

**"GROUND MAINTENANCE SERVICES OF THE KAGMAN WATERSHED PROJECT - WATERWAY D AND SEDIMENT BASIN 2 (KWP) FOR THE DEPT. OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES, SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO U.S. CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND THE APPLICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED

/S/ ARNOLD I. PALACIOS  
ACTING SECRETARY OF DLNR

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN  
DIRECTOR, P&S

### Notice of Zoning Board Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on Thursday, January 05, 2012 at 5:00 PM, Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten DanDan Commercial Bldg., Saipan

#### A. Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of December 1, 2011 minutes
5. Public Comments (not related to files for discussion under item B. Public Hearings)

#### B. Public Hearings

1. Conditional Use Application #2011-2548: Marianas Business Plaza is requesting to install solar panels on the west parking areas, driveways, and walkways fronting its building, located on lots 384-5 and 384-8 in Susupe. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.
2. Conditional Use Application #2011-2605: Hubion Corporation is proposing to operate institutional dwelling units and offices on lots 025 D 06/ 07/08 in Navy Hill. This area is zoned as Rural.

#### C. Communications/ Reports

#### D. Old Business.

1. None

#### E. New Business.

1. Update on the proposed Saipan Zoning Law of 2011
2. Office operations report

#### F. Executive (Closed) Session.

#### G. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting, Adjourn.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact Therese T. Ogumoro, Acting Zoning Administrator, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Zoning Board Chairman

### NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

#### for Marianas Business Plaza

The public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for a Conditional Use permit. The Marianas Business Plaza is requesting to install solar panels on the west parking areas, driveways, and walkways fronting its building, located on lots 384-5 and 384-8 in Susupe. This area is zoned as Village Commercial.

**Date:** January 5, 2012

**Time:** 5:00 pm

**Place:** Zoning Board Conference Room, 2nd flr, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan

The above application may be viewed at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan. Comments on the projects may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments shall be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office no later than 4:30pm, January 4, 2012. Written comments may also be submitted via email to [therese.ogumoro@zoning.gov.mp](mailto:therese.ogumoro@zoning.gov.mp), via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 or delivered to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & Division 3 of Title 10 CMC).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Board Chairman

### NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

#### for Hubion Corporation

The public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for a Conditional Use permit. The Hubion Corporation is proposing to operate institutional dwelling units and offices on lots 025 D 06/ 07/08 in Navy Hill. This area is zoned as Rural.

**Date:** January 5, 2012

**Time:** 5:00 pm

**Place:** Zoning Board Conference Room, 2nd flr, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan

The above application may be viewed at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan. Comments on the projects may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments shall be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office no later than 4:30pm, January 4, 2012. Written comments may also be submitted via email to [therese.ogumoro@zoning.gov.mp](mailto:therese.ogumoro@zoning.gov.mp), via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 or delivered to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & Division 3 of Title 10 CMC).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Board Chairman

Business

Why are toys selling out? Might be mommy blog buzz

By MAE ANDERSON  
AP RETAIL WRITER

Emily Vanek is not buying up a bunch of LeapPad Explorers herself, but she may be at least partly to blame for some stores selling out of the \$99 children's tablet this holiday season.

"The LeapPad is incredible," the Denver mother of three boys wrote to the 6,000 readers of her ColoradoMoms.com blog. "Not only do kids get to have a toy resembling their parents' tablet, it's durable and my favorite part?! It's not just mindless games they are playing."

These days, mommy bloggers don't just gab about spilled milk and poop diapers. In fact, they've become so influential in the \$22 billion toy market that toy makers go to great lengths to get their seal of approval. Their thumbs-up is particularly important during the holiday shopping season when toy makers hope to create the next hit toy.

It's a major shift for toy companies, which have always given out samples of new dolls, games and other playthings to drive sales. Five years ago, they handed out 98 percent of those products to TV stations, newspapers and



This Feb. 14, 2011 product image provided by LeapFrog Enterprises, Inc., shows the LeapPad Explorer.

magazines. But today, as much as 70 percent go to bloggers.

Mattel Inc., the world's largest toy company, has a database of about 400 mommy bloggers and their location, interests and the children's ages. Canadian toy maker Spin Master, which makes the trading card game Redakai, hired a dedicated staffer whose only job is to reach out to mommy bloggers. And small

toy maker Cepia Inc., which makes robotic Zhu Zhu pets, gets feedback from mommy bloggers before its toys hit shelves.

It's hard for toy makers to ignore the monstrous number of mommy bloggers. Nationwide, there are about 4 million or so mommy bloggers who influence millions of other parents around the world.

"Mommy bloggers started because they wanted to share things about a new baby, but the most influential ones got into social media and realized they could make a difference," says Maria Bailey, whose BSM Media firm helps companies pick mommy bloggers with the most reach on the Twitter and Facebook social media websites. "Sometimes that difference is as simple as directing a mom to a toy that will save money."

That's why when LeapFrog Enterprises wanted to roll out its LeapPad Explorer kid-size tablet, it reached out to 200 of the top mommy bloggers. The goal? To get them to generate buzz for the tablet by throwing "mommy parties."

The Emeryville, Calif.-based company sent each blogger a

kit that included a LeapPad, a game for it and coupons. LeapFrog also sent tips on how many people to invite (about 5 adults and 15 kids) and suggested recipes (ice cream sundaes).

For bloggers like Vanek, the Denver mom who bills herself as the "go-to answer for all things mom and kids in Colorado," it was a chance to be a

hero of sorts to other parents and their kids.

"It not only lets my own children get to try out the newest/hottest toys, it allows them to share them with their friends," she says. "It allows me to get to have my own friends over for something better than a Tupperware party where I'm doing a hard sales pitch."

But for LeapFrog, it was an opportunity to get word-of-mouth going early.

It was the first time the company had hosted "mommy parties," but it seems to have paid off. The company declined to give sales numbers, but the LeapPad has been selling out online and in stores across the country this holiday season.

Europe fights to save cap-and-trade as crisis hits

BRUSSELS (AP)—Europe's main weapon in the battle against climate change is now fighting for its own survival.

In early January, investors in the continent's cap-and-trade system still had to pay some euro14 (\$18.30) for the right to emit one ton of carbon dioxide into the air. By last week, the price of one emission allowance had tumbled to a meager euro6.41—making it much cheaper to pollute and slashing the financial incentives for companies to invest in low-carbon technologies.

Analysts warn that the prospect of another recession in the debt-ridden continent, and the accompanying decline in emissions, could push prices below euro2 by the end of next month.

The troubles in the carbon

market, a system being watched closely from California to China, is linked to the struggles of Europe's other ambitious project, the euro. And just as financial investors have looked to the European Central Bank to save the currency through massive intervention in the bond markets, analysts say the emissions market may need similar centralized help.

Last week, 19 companies, including oil giant Royal Dutch Shell PLC, Philips Electronics NV and supermarket chain Tesco PLC, sent a letter to the European Commission urging it to reduce the number of emission allowances in the system and figure out how to protect the market from future economic shocks. The commission and national governments jointly manage the

cap-and-trade system.

"The lower price is really undermining the development of technologies that will be needed in the decades to come," said David Hone, Shell's climate change adviser.

Shell, which is mostly known for selling oil and gas, has been one of the pioneers of carbon capture and storage, projects in which CO2 emissions are stored underground so they don't get released into the atmosphere and contribute to global warming. But investing in new technologies like carbon capture and storage only becomes commercially viable at a carbon price of between euro25 and euro30, Hone said.

"Over the last few months, we have seen some of these projects disappear," he added.

Design a countdown-to-retirement plan

Retirement can be some of the most rewarding years of your life.

Yet many people jeopardize the quality and security of their golden years by not planning. They spend their 20s searching for a partner, their 30s climbing the corporate ladder and their 40s juggling work meetings and their children's soccer games. As retirement nears, they fret about how little they've done to prepare for the next few decades of their life.

One of consumers' biggest problems? Not saving enough—or sometimes, at all—for retirement.

A Harris Interactive survey conducted in November 2010 found that more than one in five adults over the age of 65 had not saved for retirement. Among adults of all ages, one in three had not saved for retirement.

Mike Smith, however, began saving in his 20s. Smith, 55, put away 8 percent of his income and then eventually increased it to 10 percent. He believes he'll be able to retire in the next few years because of his careful planning.

"The only thing I advise my children is to start saving early," says Smith, of Seattle.

Saving money early, and often, is one step to making your golden years secure. Here are others to consider as you approach retirement.

**15 YEARS BEFORE RETIREMENT**

If you don't have a financial plan, now's the time to make one. This will allow you to track your savings and help you figure out how much you need in retirement so you won't run out of money.

"When you're 15 years away from retirement, that's when you have time to plan and make corrections along the way if markets don't perform well," says Wei-Yin Hu, director of financial research at Financial Engines, a provider of financial advice for 401(k) plans.

Your finances can also recover if health emergencies arise.

When Roy Emmett was in his late 40s, his daughter needed a bone marrow transplant. The operation depleted his savings.

"I had my furniture and my two cars when I got through with that," says Emmett, who retired this year at 66.

He rebuilt his nest egg by saving 15% of his income each year. He also cashed out of stocks and put his money into bonds in the fall of 2007 to lock in gains. By doing so, he dodged the market turmoil that followed as the U.S. economy slipped into recession.

To help you get started with retirement planning, websites including analyzenow.com, troweprice.com and vanguard.com provide free tools.

If you need a professional's help, check out the National Association of Personal Financial Advisors, an organization of fee-only planners, or the Financial Planning Association, a trade group for planners who charge fees as well as commissions.

**10 YEARS BEFORE RETIREMENT**

If you expect to downsize to a smaller house in retirement, consider doing it sooner rather than later.

The savings you get from moving to a smaller, and hopefully less expensive, home will have more time to compound, says Henry "Bud" Hebel, a former Boeing executive who developed retirement planning website analyzenow.com.

A smaller house could mean lower utility and tax bills. And downsizing can give you a cash buffer as you approach retirement so you don't have to tap into a 401(k) or individual retirement account, which could subject you to a 10% early-withdrawal penalty and ordinary income taxes if you haven't reached 59½.

A decade before retirement is also a good time to think about honing a skill that could generate income for you in retirement.

Another way you could use this skill, whether it's fixing a car or making a cake, is by trading services with other retirees, says Hebel, the author of Getting Started in a Financially Secure Retirement.

Review your financial plan. Changes in your life—maybe your kids require more financial support or you won the lottery—in the last few years may mean that you have more or less money. That,

By KATHY CHU  
USA Today



in turn, could force you to adjust your savings level and your retirement date.

**5 YEARS BEFORE RETIREMENT**

Five years before retirement, Norman Boone, president of Mosaic Financial Partners in San Francisco, advises his clients to build a bucket list of 50 things they want to do in their golden years.

"Having a vision of the things you want to do will make it more likely that you'll actually do them," says Boone. "We find that the first 20 to 30 are usually pretty easy, then the really meaningful things start to come out."

This list will also be helpful in thinking about how much you'll spend in retirement. In Boone's experience, clients tend to spend more per year in retirement than when they were working. Retirees may spend more on medical and living costs, as well as on vacations and family visits.

Start thinking about when you want to take Social Security benefits. The longer you postpone Social Security payments—until age 70—the bigger your monthly check. But delay these payouts only if you expect to live for many years in retirement.

Other smart moves: Pay off your mortgage before retirement. And, try living for one year on your retirement budget.

"That's the acid test," Hebel says. "If you can't do it for a year, how do you think you'll do it for 30 years?"

STOCK  
PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW  
12,103.58  
+337.32  
+2.87%

S&P  
1,241.30  
+35.95  
+2.98%

NASDAQ  
2,603.73  
+80.59  
+3.19%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	0.9863
British Pound	0.6382
Canadian Dollar	1.0265
Chinese Yuan	6.3419
Euro	0.7629

Hong Kong Dollar	7.7806	Philippine Peso	43.67
Indian Rupee	52.76	Singapore Dollar	1.2929
Indonesian Rupiah	9080	South Korean Won	1147.9
Japanese Yen	77.798	Swiss Franc	0.9298
Malaysian Ringgit	3.17	Taiwan Dollar	30.2625
New Zealand Dollar	1.2958	Thailand Baht	31.23

# Nation

## Obama, Biden welcome home US commander in Iraq

**JOINT BASE ANDREWS, Md.** (AP)—Blending solemn tradition with joyous reunion, the top commander of U.S. forces in Iraq returned home to U.S. soil Tuesday, greeted by his wife and his president in an understated ceremony to mark the end of the nine-year conflict.

President Barack Obama met Gen. Lloyd Austin and his top command staff with a smart salute at this military post in suburban Washington. Austin made his homecoming with his staff bearing the U.S. Forces-Iraq flag, the symbolic conclusion to the war.

Obama was accompanied by Vice President Joe Biden. Though neither offered formal remarks, both greeted the troops and their families.

Those families, however, had to await the ritual return of the flag before embracing their loved ones. Under Army custom the flag will be retired and either stored or displayed.

"Today we bring home the colors to United States soil, at the same time we embrace many of our own back into the fold just in time for the holidays," Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the returning men and women. "Welcome home."

The last U.S. troops withdrew from Iraq on Sunday. In a visible reminder of the conflict, Dempsey, Austin and the troops who accompanied him wore their combat uniforms.

With Obama, an early opponent of the war, sitting nearby, Austin praised the war's outcome.

"What our troops achieved in Iraq over the course of nearly nine years is truly remarkable," he said. "Together with our coalition partners and core of dedicated civilians, they removed a



From left, Vice President Joe Biden and President Barack Obama greet Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, the top U.S. commander in Iraq, on the tarmac at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2011, during a ceremony marking the return of the United States Forces-Iraq Colors and the end of the war in Iraq.

brutal dictator and gave the Iraqi people their freedom."

Later, at the White House, Obama referred to the ceremony while calling for House Republicans to accept a Senate bipartisan compromise to extend a payroll tax cut for two months.

"These Americans and all Americans who served are the embodiment of cour-

age, and selflessness and patriotism," Obama said during a surprise appearance in the White House briefing room. "They work as a team and they do their job. And they do it for something bigger than themselves."

"The people in this town need to learn something from them."

Dempsey and Austin saluted military

families and Dempsey also singled out the USO and its history of entertaining troops during wars. Among those in the audience were former NBA star Robert Horry, a participant in a current USO holiday tour.

As the ceremony concluded, Obama waded into a teary and jubilant scene of reunion as troops and their families hugged and posed for photographs.

## Obama blames GOP for upcoming tax increase

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—Continuing a tax cut of up to \$40 a week for workers and unemployment benefits for millions of jobless hit a wall Tuesday as the House rejected a two-month extension of both, and President Barack Obama blamed Republicans for the stalemate.

"The clock is ticking, time is running out," Obama said shortly after House voted 229-193 to request negotiations with the Senate on renewing the payroll tax cuts for a year.

House Speaker John Boehner, told that Obama had sought his help, replied, "I need the president to help out." His voice rose as he said it, and his words were cheered by dozens of Republicans lawmakers who have pushed him and the rest of the leadership to pursue a more confrontational strategy with Democrats and the White House in an already contentious year of divided government.

This time, it wasn't a partial government shutdown or even an unprecedented Treasury default that was at stake, but the prospect that payroll taxes would rise on Jan. 1 for 160 million workers and long-term unemployment benefits end for millions of jobless victims of the worst recession since the 1930s.

Yet another deadline has been entangled in the dispute, this one affecting seniors, but the administra-

tion announced it had finessed a way around it. Officials said paperwork for doctors who treat Medicare patients in the early days of the new year will not be processed until Jan. 18, giving lawmakers more time to avert a 27 percent cut in fees threatened for Jan. 1.

Whatever the stakes, there was little indication that Republicans would get their wish for negotiations with the Senate any time soon. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., issued a statement saying he would be happy to resume talks on a yearlong measure—"but not before" the House ratifies the two-month bill and sends it to Obama for his signature.

Given Obama's remarks and Reid's refusal to negotiate, it was unclear what leverage Republicans had in the year-end standoff. It appeared likely the partisan disagreement could easily persist past Christmas and into the last week of the year.

The standoff was sowing confusion in business, running out of days to adapt to any new payroll tax regimen. Even the Senate's proposed two-month extension was creating headaches because it contained a two-tiered system geared to ensuring that higher-income earners paid a higher rate on some of their wages, according to a trade group.

## Drifting snow makes travel extra tough in Great Plains

**TOPEKA, Kan. (AP)**—A deadly storm that halted travel throughout the Great Plains weakened Tuesday as it headed east into Missouri and toward the Great Lakes, and officials reopened interstates in areas where motorists had been forced to adjust holiday plans mid-trip.

Authorities still were reporting snow drifts of up to 10 feet high in southeast Colorado, and Texas officials warned drivers to stay off the road in the Panhandle so crews would have a clear path to remove ice and snow. Major highways in the western half of the Oklahoma Panhandle remained closed.

Still, officials reopened Interstate 40 in the Texas Panhandle and New Mexico, and portions of Interstate 70 in western Kansas that had been closed. New Mexico reopened a closed section of Interstate 25, the main highway from Santa Fe to the Colorado line after crews cleared drifts as high as 5 feet. The storm dumped as much as 15 inches of snow as it hit parts of five states.

At least 40 people were stranded at the Loughorn Motel on Main Street in Boise City, Okla., where manager Pedro Segovia said blowing snow had created drifts 2- and 3-feet high and closed the main road.

"Some people cannot even get out of their houses. There is too much snow," Segovia said. "It's was blowing. We've got big piles. It's real bad."

Receptionist MaKenzie Grove sympathized with the 50 or so people strand-

ed at the hotel where she works in Guymon, about 60 miles east of Boise City. She too spent Monday night there.

"I have this rinky-dink car that does not do well in this," Grove said. "If we wouldn't have had the wind, it wouldn't have been as bad. The winds ... made the drifts really bad."

A few guests traveling to Oklahoma City managed to leave Tuesday, but others would likely have to wait another night before all roads were clear, she said.

In Kansas, schools in Manhattan canceled classes Tuesday, anticipating several inches of snow. The National Weather Service reported later that 3 inches or less fell.

To the east, a cold rain pelted the Topeka area, turned into a mix of light sleet and snow without much accumulation and tapered off. Forecasters said the storm became less potent as it moved northeast toward the Great Lakes.

Kansas Highway Patrol Trooper Ben Gardner said the patrol dealt with dozens of accidents in which motorists slid off highways Tuesday morning.

"We had ice-covered roads, covered by snow packed on top," he said.

The late-autumn snowstorm lumbered into the region Monday, turning roads to ice and reducing visibility to zero. Many of the areas hit Monday had enjoyed relatively balmy 60-degree temperatures just 24 hours earlier.

### ACROSS THE NATION

#### **5 die when small plane crashes on major NJ highway**

**MORRIS TOWNSHIP, N.J.** (AP)—A small plane heading for Georgia crashed Tuesday morning on a major New York-area highway, spiraling out of control, hitting a wooded median and scattering wreckage across the road. All five people aboard were killed, but no one on the ground was injured. The pilot had discussed icy conditions with controllers just before the plane went down, but investigators were unsure what role, if any, icing played in the crash. The New York investment banking firm Greenhill & Co. said two of its managing directors, Jeffrey Buckalew, 45, and Rakesh Chawla, 36, as well as Buckalew's wife and two children, were on the plane that crashed on Interstate 287.

#### **Trash bins, stream searched in Maine toddler case**

**WATERVILLE, Maine (AP)**—Investigators combed through trash bins, drained a stream and pored over more than 100 leads offered by the public in the search for a 20-month-old girl who disappeared from her father's home over the weekend. The FBI also stepped up its effort to find Ayla Reynolds on Tuesday, launching a door-to-door canvass of neighbors to glean any scrap of information that may lead them to the little girl, said Waterville Police Chief Joseph Massey. The investigation remains a missing-person case, he said. Massey refused to speculate on whether Ayla was alive, saying authorities are focused on finding her.

#### **Nuns: Prayers to Marianne, Hawaii soil cured woman**

**HONOLULU (AP)**—The second Vatican-authenticated miracle in allowing a nun to soon become St. Marianne Cope involves the healing of a New York woman who had an infection destroying her organs, nuns from her religious order revealed for the first time Tuesday. A bag of soil containing Marianne's bone fragments from the Hawaii peninsula where leprosy patients were exiled was pinned to Sharon Smith's hospital gown, said Sister Burkard, a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities in Syracuse, N.Y. Marianne cared for leprosy patients at the Kalaupapa settlement on the island of Molokai in the 1880s. She died in 1918 of natural causes and was buried there. The pope proclaimed her a saint this week after the Vatican authenticated two miracles that were a result of her intercession. The first miracle involved the unexplained cure of a New York girl who in 1992 at age 14, was diagnosed with germ cell ovarian cancer.

# Asia

## Death toll from Philippine flash floods tops 1,000

**ILIGAN, Philippines (AP)**—The official death toll from last week's massive flash flooding in two southern Philippine cities topped 1,000 on Wednesday as authorities said they lost count of how many more were missing in one of the worst calamities to hit the coastal region.

The latest tally showed a total of 1,002 have been confirmed dead, including 650 in Cagayan de Oro and an additional 283 in nearby Iligan city, said Benito Ramos, head of the Civil Defense Office. The rest came from several other southern and central provinces.

A tropical storm swept through the area Friday night and unleashed flash floods in the middle of the night that caught most of the victims in their sleep.

"There were many lessons learned by the people who did not listen to national and local governments, but this is not the time to put the blame on them," Ramos told The Associated Press, adding that warnings by weather forecasters of an approaching storm went unheeded.

He said the government continues to be focused on retriev-

ing the bodies, most of which are being pulled from the sea off Cagayan de Oro.

"We've lost count of the missing," he said.

President Benigno Aquino III declared a state of national calamity during a visit to the re-

moved to safety.

"I do not accept that everything had been done. I know that we can do more. We must determine what really happened," Aquino said. "Must this end in tragedy? We knew that (storm) was coming. There should have been efforts to avoid the destruction."

Authorities and grieving relatives have begun burying the dead.

People wept during funeral rites at the Iligan city cemetery, where soldiers carried the caskets of at least 38 victims Tuesday. Many wore masks to try to block the stench of decomposing bodies.

"We have to give the dead a decent burial," Mayor Lawrence Cruz said. He said authorities were using part of the cemetery's passageway to build tombs.

About 45,000 displaced were still crowded in evacuation centers as aid workers rushed in relief supplies. Lack of running water was a major concern.

UNICEF launched an appeal for \$4.2 million to assist the victims and dispatched water bladders, hygiene kits and temporary pit latrines and mobile water units.



gion Tuesday and promised the government "will do its best to prevent a repeat of this tragedy."

He said there would be an assessment of why so many people died and why those living along riverbanks and close to the coast—most of them illegal settlers—had not been

## Seoul: NKorea raises security, has troops on alert

**PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP)**—North Korea has tightened internal security and put troops on alert since the announcement of leader Kim Jong Il's death in moves to consolidate power behind his young son and heir, South Korean intelligence indicated Wednesday.

Concerns over what will happen next in the unpredictable communist enclave—which has a 1.2-million troop military, advanced ballistic missiles and a nuclear weapons development program—have sharply raised tensions around northeast Asia.

Kim Jong Il ruled the country for 17 years after inheriting power from his father, national founder and North Korean hero Kim Il Sung. His chosen heir—Kim Jong Un—only entered the public view last year and remains a mystery to most of the world.

But South Korean parliament member Kwon Young-se said

Seoul's National Intelligence Service believes the North is now concentrating on consolidating Kim Jong Un's power and that the country has placed its troops on alert since Kim Jong Il's death.

North Korea on Monday announced Kim, 69, died of a massive heart attack.

Kwon said the NIS has told the parliamentary intelligence committee, of which he is a member, that senior military officials have pledged allegiance to Kim Jong Un, but police security has been tightened in major cities across the country.

Initial indications coming out of North Korea suggest the transition to Kim Jong Un was moving forward.

The young Kim, who is still in his twenties, led a procession of senior officials Tuesday in a viewing of Kim Jong Il's body, which is being displayed in a glass coffin near that of Kim Il

Sung.

Publicly presiding over the funeral proceedings was an important milestone for Kim's son, strengthening his image as the country's political face at home and abroad.

State media said Kim Jong Un also received mourners, including foreign envoys, in the Kumsusan Memorial Palace as he stood with a "guard of honor by the sides of the bier together with members of the National funeral Committee."

The report in KCNA did not specify which foreign countries the envoys represented.

According to official media, more than five million North Koreans have gathered at monuments and memorials in the capital since the death of Kim Jong Il. Hundreds of thousands visited monuments around the city within hours of the official announcement that Kim had died over the weekend.

### Thai army boss: Stop criticizing law guarding king

**BANGKOK (AP)**—Thailand's army commander wants an end to calls for reform of a law mandating three to 15 years' imprisonment for people found guilty of insulting the monarchy. Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha said Tuesday he believes debate over the lese majeste law is excessive, and critics who say it should be amended because it is too harsh and limits free speech should go live abroad. The military exercises considerable influence in Thailand, in part because of a history of military coups, most recently in 2006.

# World

## Egypt women march against army in fury over abuse

**CAIRO (AP)**—Around 10,000 women marched through central Cairo demanding Egypt's ruling military step down Tuesday in an unprecedented show of outrage over soldiers who dragged women by the hair and stomped on them, and stripped one half-naked in the street during a fierce crackdown on activists the past week.

The dramatic protest, which grew as the women marched

from Tahrir Square through downtown, was fueled by the widely circulated images of abuses of women. Many of the marchers touted the photo of the young woman whose clothes were partially pulled off by troops, baring her down to her blue bra, as she struggled on the ground.

"Tantawi stripped your women naked, come join us," the crowd chanted to passers-

by, referring to Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi, the head of the military council that has ruled Egypt since the Feb. 11 fall of Hosni Mubarak. "The daughters of Egypt are a red line," they chanted.

Even before the protest was over, the military council issued an unusually strong statement of regret for what it called "violations" against women—a quick turnaround after days of dismissing the significance of the abuse.

The council expressed "deep regret to the great women of Egypt" and affirmed "its respect and total appreciation" for women and their right to protest and take part in political life. It promised it was taking measures to punish those responsible for violations.

The statement suggested the military's fear that attacks on women could wreck its prestige at home and abroad, which has already been heavily eroded by its fierce, five-day-old crackdown on pro-democracy protesters demanding it surrender power.



An Egyptian woman raises a copy of Al Tahrir newspaper fronted by a picture showing a half naked woman protester beaten by army soldiers as hundreds of Egyptian women march at Cairo streets angered by the recent violence used against them during clashes between police and protesters in Cairo, Egypt Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2011.

## Iraq VP denies charges of running death squads

**BAGHDAD (AP)**—Iraq's Sunni vice president denied Shiite accusations that he organized death squads, describing the charges Tuesday as a trumped-up case brought only after the departure of U.S. troops about assassinations allegedly committed five years ago.

The arrest warrant issued against the highest-ranking Sunni politician threatens to tear apart Iraq's coalition government and perhaps kick-start another Sunni insurgency. It raised suspicions that Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, a Shiite, ordered the arrest of Vice President Tariq al-Hashemi as part of a campaign to consolidate his hold on power out of a fear that Sunnis in and out of Iraq are plotting against him.

Sunnis, the minority Muslim sect in Iraq, feared a new round of sectarian warfare could result from the charges, announced the day after the last American soldiers left the country. The accusations date back to the height of the war in 2006 and 2007, when neighbors turned on neighbors and whole sections of Baghdad were expunged of one Muslim sect or the other.

Kurdish leaders were trying to work out a solution, sheltering al-Hashemi from arrest in their semiautonomous region in northern Iraq.

"I swear to God that al-Hashemi didn't commit any sin or do anything wrong against any Iraqi either now or in the future and this is my pledge to God," al-Hashemi said at a press conference in which he

accused al-Maliki of ordering the warrant.

He described the confessions of his bodyguards that aired on Iraqi state TV as "fabricated" and the charges as a campaign to "embarrass" him.

"Al-Maliki is behind the whole issue. The country is in the hands of al-Maliki. All the efforts that have been exerted to reach national reconciliation and to unite Iraq are now gone. So yes, I blame al-Maliki," he said.

Al-Hashemi spoke from the Kurdish city of Irbil, where he traveled on Sunday after learning that authorities were preparing to arrest him.

Although the Kurdish region is part of Iraq, al-Hashemi is probably safe from Baghdad's reach. Kurdish leaders run their own security affairs.

### WORLD BRIEFS

#### 2 days of Syria violence leave 150 dead

**BEIRUT (AP)**—Security forces pursuing anti-government activists and army defectors shot dead at least 47 people in Syria on Tuesday, pushing the toll for two days of violence to nearly 150 even as the regime prepared to allow in foreign monitors under an Arab League plan aimed at stopping the bloodshed. Syrian state television showed pictures of military maneuvers and said they were meant to show its forces are ready to "repulse any aggression the enemies of our nations might think about." Activist groups said about 100 people were killed on Monday, the same day Syria agreed to the monitors after weeks of stalling. About 70 of the dead were said to be army defectors.

The groups said Tuesday's toll was at least 47 and possibly as high as 62.

#### Bolivia: Suspects arrested in exorcism killing

**LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP)**—An evangelical pastor and his sister have been arrested by police in Bolivia after they purportedly killed a sibling during a bathtub exorcism, officials said Monday. The suspects, Carlos Uriona and Adelaida Marca, were arrested after they allegedly drowned their sister during the ritual, police spokesman Juan Carlos Corrales said. "The suspects confessed that their 18-year-old sister was possessed by the demon and they wanted to purify her and christen her in a bathtub, but it went too far," said Corrales, speaking during a telephone interview.

### ASIAN BRIEFS

#### Indonesia finds 50 bodies after ship sinking

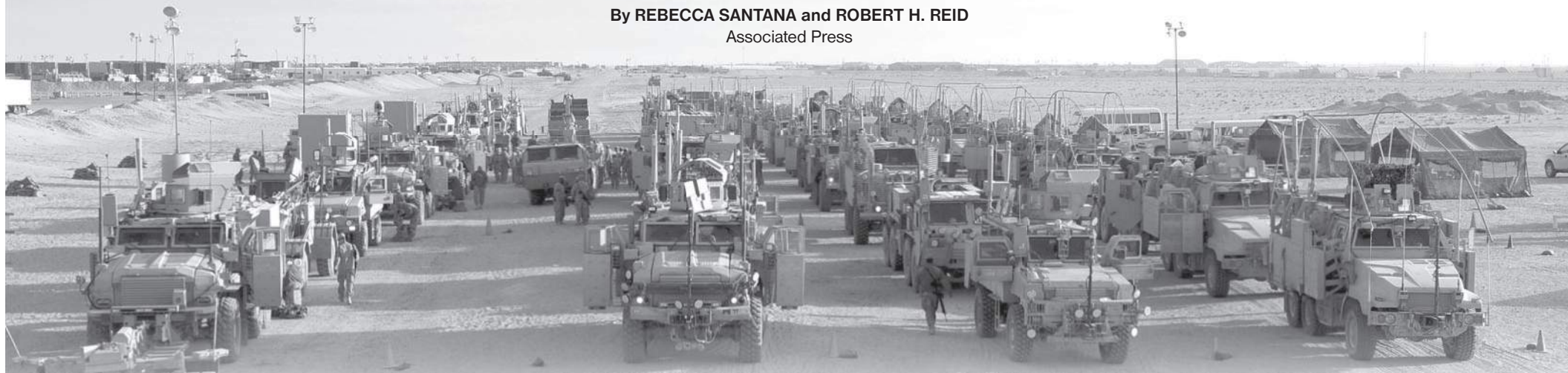
**JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)**—Rescuers have found more than 50 bodies in waters off Indonesia, days after a ship packed with asylum seekers sank in stormy weather. More than 150 others are missing and feared dead. The heavily overloaded vessel—with about 250 men, women and children fleeing economic and political hardship in Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan—was carrying twice its capacity when it was slammed by a towering wave. Survivors said they were trying to reach Australia.

# Focus

**BAGHDAD (AP)**—In the beginning, it all looked simple: topple Saddam Hussein, destroy his purported weapons of mass destruction and lay the foundation for a pro-Western government in the heart of the Arab world.

## Iraq: A war of muddled goals, **PAINFUL SACRIFICE**

By **REBECCA SANTANA** and **ROBERT H. REID**  
Associated Press



U.S. Army soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division, the last soldiers to leave Iraq, arrive at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, Sunday, Dec. 18, 2011. AP

Nearly 4,500 American and more than 100,000 Iraqi lives later, the objective became simply to get out—and leave behind a country where democracy has at least a chance, where Iran does not dominate and where conditions may not be good but “good enough.”

Even those modest goals may prove too ambitious after American forces leave and Iraq begins to chart its own course. How the Iraqis fare in the coming years will determine how history judges a war which became among the most politically contentious in American history.

Toppling Saddam was the easy part. Television images from the days following the March 20, 2003, start of the war made the conflict look relatively painless, like a certain type of Hollywood movie: American tanks speeding across the bleak and featureless Iraqi plains, huge blasts rattling Baghdad in the “shock and awe” bombing and the statue of the dictator tumbling down from his pedestal.

But Americans soon collided with the complex realities of an alien society few of them knew or understood. Who were the real power brokers? This ayatollah or that Sunni chief? What were the right buttons to push? America had its own ideas of the new Iraq. Did most Iraqis share them?

Places most Americans had never heard of in 2002, like Fallujah and Abu Ghraib, became household words. Saddam was captured nine months after the invasion. The war dragged on for eight more years. No WMD were ever found. And Iraq drained billions from America's treasury and diverted resources from Afghanistan, where the Taliban and al-Qaida rebounded after their defeat in the 2001 invasion.

In the early months, America's enemy was mostly Sunnis angry over the loss of power and prestige when their patron Saddam fell. In September 2007, the bloodiest year for U.S. troops, Shiite militias—part of a community that suffered terribly under Saddam—were responsible for three-quarters of the at-

tacks in the Baghdad area that killed or wounded Americans, according to the then-No. 2 U.S. commander in Iraq, Lt. Gen. Ray Odierno.

Saddam had not tolerated al-Qaida. With Saddam gone and the country in chaos, al-Qaida in Iraq became the terror movement's largest and most dangerous franchise, drawing in fighters from North Africa to Asia for a war that lingers on through suicide bombings and assassinations, albeit at a lower intensity.

As American troops prepare to go home by Dec. 31, they leave behind a country still facing violence, with closer ties to the U.S. than Saddam had but still short of what Washington once envisioned. Iranian influence is on the rise. One of the few positive developments from the American viewpoint—a democratic foothold—is far from secure.

In 20-20 hindsight, the U.S. probably should have seen it coming. By 2003, communal rivalries and hatreds, fueled by years of Saddam's suppression of Kurds and Shiites, were brewing beneath the lid of a closed society cobbled together from the wreckage of the Ottoman Empire after World War I. Saddam's rule of terror kept all these passions in the pot. Lift the lid and the pot boils over. Remove Saddam and a new fight flares for the power that the ousted ruler and his Baath Party had monopolized for decades.

A day after Saddam's statue was hauled down in Baghdad, the U.S. arranged what was supposed to be a reconciliation meeting in the Shiite holy city of Najaf, bringing together prominent clerics from the majority Shiite sect eager for a dominant role in Iraq after the collapse of Saddam's Sunni-dominated rule.

One of them was Abdul-Majid al-Khoie, son of a revered ayatollah. Al-Khoie had fled to Britain during Saddam's crackdown against Shiites after the 1991 Gulf War. Now he and the other clerics were back in Iraq, freed from Saddam's yoke.

As al-Khoie approached a mosque,

a crowd swarmed around him. He was hacked to death in an attack widely blamed on Muqtada al-Sadr, a fellow Shiite cleric.

In Baghdad, meanwhile, mobs looted and burned much of the city as bewildered U.S. soldiers stood by.

“Stuff happens,” then-U.S. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld famously said at the time. “And it's untidy, and freedom's untidy, and free people are free to make mistakes, and commit crimes and do bad things. They're also free to live their lives and do wonderful things. And that's what's going to happen here.” Within months, angry Sunnis had taken up arms to resist what they saw as a Shiite takeover on the coattails of the Americans. Their ranks were bolstered by former soldiers whose livelihood was taken away when the Americans, in a bid to appease Shiite and Kurdish leaders, abolished Saddam's military.

In August 2003, a massive truck bomb devastated the U.N. headquarters, killing the chief of mission, his deputy and 20 other people. Two months later, rockets slammed into the U.S.-occupied Rasheed Hotel in the Green Zone, killing an American lieutenant colonel and wounding 17 people. One of the architects of the war, visiting Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, barely escaped injury.

By then it was clear: America was in for a long and brutal fight. The triumphant scene of Saddam's statue falling would be replaced by new iconic images: the bodies of butchered Americans hanging from a bridge in Fallujah, military vehicles engulfed in flames, terrified hostages staring into a video camera moments before decapitation, and flag-draped caskets resting at open graves as aging parents and young widows wept for their loved ones.

The Americans arrived with their own agenda for the new Iraq. That didn't always mesh with what the Iraqis had in mind.

Phillip J. Dermer, a now-retired U.S. colonel who has returned to Iraq as a businessman, spent the summer of

2003 helping set up a city council in Baghdad.

The idea was to give Iraqis a quick taste of democracy while issues like a constitution and national elections were being worked out.

After months of preparation, the council was elected and got down to its first order of business: To the Americans' surprise, an al-Sadr representative came forward to change the name of the Shiite slum in eastern Baghdad from Saddam City to Sadr City in honor of the cleric's father, who was assassinated by the deposed regime. The measure passed unanimously.

Dermer and his colleagues had been expecting a vote for something like a new budget for water. For Dermer it was a signal. The Iraqis had their own priorities.

“We were so focused on getting this council together and hold their hands up to vote when the whole time something else was happening. We weren't aware of it, and we didn't catch it,” he said.

The Americans would soon learn the Iraqis were primarily interested in promoting their own religious or ethnic group at the expense of others.

Increasingly, Sunni militants were targeting not just U.S. troops but Iraqi Shiites.

Shiites initially held their fire and did not retaliate. Their highest-ranking cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, wanted Shiites to keep focused on the main prize: majority control of the government.

All that changed with the bombing of a major Shiite shrine in Samarra in February 2006.

Newly formed Shiite militias struck back against random Sunnis, often dragging them away in the dead of night. It was now Shiites against Sunnis, neighbor against neighbor.

America was now in the middle of a civil war, partly of its own making, despite intense efforts by the Bush administration to resist that view.

The U.S. seemed overwhelmed. Just keeping count of the death tolls was

a challenge, leading to a bizarre U.S. military formula where a body found on the streets was listed as a “sectarian” victim if the fatal wound was in the head. If the wound were in the torso, it was counted as random violence.

For Americans back home, Iraq was not a war with morale-boosting milestones that could point to progress. No Pacific islands secured, no heroic storming of the beaches at Normandy. No newsreel scenes of grateful civilians welcoming liberators with flowers.

Instead, the war became a mind-numbing litany of suicide bombings and ambushes. “Progress” was defined by grim statistics such as fewer civilians found butchered today than yesterday. Soon it all began to sound the same, a bloody, soul-killing “Ground Hog Day” of brutality after brutality seemingly without purpose. Pacify one village, move on to another, only to have violence flare again in the first place.

Sen. John McCain summed it up at a congressional hearing three years into the war: “What I worry about is we're playing a game of whack-a-mole here.”

A 24-year-old platoon leader in Ramadi expressed the same sentiment in a different way. “Every time we go out, we run,” he told an Associated Press reporter in 2006. “If you stand still, you WILL get shot at.”

It was even worse for the Iraqis. Everyone was a potential target for death. Sunni militants, especially in al-Qaida, considered Shiites as much of an enemy as American soldiers. Shiite militias viewed all Sunnis as Saddam loyalists ready to bring back the old regime.

By such twisted logic, mothers shopping for food in a market were just as legitimate a target as armed, uniformed soldiers. Car bombs and suicide attacks killed thousands. Sons, fathers and brothers disappeared—often without a trace—abducted by death squads and presumably buried in unmarked desert graves. Nearly everyone had a relative or a close friend who died or disappeared—more than 3,700 were

See **IRAQ** on Next Page

# Environment

## 63 YEARS AND COUNTING

# Christmas survey tracks health of bird populations

By **LESLIE BRODY**  
THE RECORD (HACKENSACK N.J.)

**HACKENSACK, N.J.**—Spotting a partridge in a pear tree would have been swell, but bird lovers who fanned out across the region on Saturday for the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count were thrilled to find fish crows, starlings and mourning doves.

More than 50 people in about a dozen groups began counting bird numbers and species at dawn as part of a conservation project touted as the longest-running citizen-science survey in the world. It began nationally 112 years ago when a nature lover suggested a gentle alternative to a holiday tradition of shooting game. Now this hunt tracks the health of bird popula-

tions as they respond to changes in their habitats.

"I'm dreaming of finding a barred owl," said David Hall, leader of the 63rd annual count in Bergen and Passaic counties, as he tromped through the muddy woods at Losen Slote Creek Park in Little Ferry. "It's very rare for our territory."

Hall, a neuroscientist who studies genes in the brains of worms in search of clues to the human brain, has long been passionate about this hobby. "My profession has me looking through microscopes," he said. "When I relax I look through binoculars instead."

Julie McCall of Lyndhurst confessed to being a "pathological" bird counter all year round. It gives her a calming outlet from her work as a teacher of

children with autism.

"I spend hours and hours away from everything," she said. "I'm also a little obsessive so I get to keep lists of everything. I do this everywhere I go. I wear my binoculars to the Laundromat."

Sylvia Kleff, an 82-year-old from Montville, got into bird watching as a Girl Scout.

"I love the people involved," she said.

The trio made soft bird calls—known as "pishing"—as they scoured the leafless trees in this patch of the Meadowlands.

"Look, there's a goldfinch on top of the birch," said Hall.

"And a mockingbird on the roses!" said McCall.

Changing environment

Likely because of suburban sprawl and changes in climate, Hall said some birds don't come to Bergen County anymore, including the Boreal chickadee and three-toed woodpecker. Others that used to be rare—such as Canada geese—have flocked here, much to the dismay of golfers. Lately, bald eagles have be-

**MCT**  
A Turkey vulture spreads its wings to warm them in the morning sun at Irvine Lake during the annual National Audubon Society Christmas bird count.



come more common.

On Friday, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection reported a dramatic comeback for American bald eagles, which were nearly extinct in the state in the 1980s. Thanks to a ban on the pesticide DDT and restoration efforts, the agency said, New Jersey has 102 pairs of actively nesting eagles and 22 new nests, including four in North Jersey.

Sometimes there's a temporary "eruption" of birds. If certain crops are poor in Canada, for example, Hall said, "goldfinches come here hungry, and we're very excited when that happens."

The Bergen County Audubon Society, now with 2,000 members across North Jersey, grew out of the Hackensack club,

which happened to be founded on Dec. 7, 1941—the day the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. "I'm very proud our organization is still alive after 70 years," Hall said. "For a volunteer organization that's not easy."

Hall said 29 bird counts were planned for Saturday and the next few weeks in New Jersey, and more than 1,000 would take place across the country. He planned to hunt all day but said some watchers peeled off early. Alas, he said, "It's hard to find new birds after lunch."

Last year's worldwide count shattered records, according to the National Audubon Society: With surveys in Canada, Latin America, the Caribbean and on Pacific Islands, 2,215 counts and 62,624 people tallied more

than 60 million birds.

The count has been a model for other volunteer science efforts, such as Project Budburst, in which participants report on the timing of flowering events to monitor climate change, and the Great World Wide Star Count, in which they track the visibility of stars to monitor light pollution. The Internet has made such projects easier to pull off.

"The lesson," said an editorial in *Nature* magazine, "is that the world is full of enthusiastic people—and that the opportunities for researchers to tap into this enthusiasm are limited only by their own imaginations."

For results of the local count, please check [Bergen-county.audubon.org](http://Bergen-county.audubon.org) in the coming weeks.

## Get crafty this season

By **TERRI BENNETT**  
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS



Let me just put one thing out there—I don't consider myself "crafty." I am not the person who can take a dresser from the dump and turn into a shabby chic work of art or take scraps of wood and create a fabulous new picture frame. But this year is a bit different. I'm inspired by smaller projects that I can actually do and I've found it's a way to Do Your Part to get more use out of things destined for the trashcan.

We all know that kids delight in the holidays. A friend of mine and her young daughter tackled a project they found online. They collected unwanted ornaments of different shapes and colors and hot glued them to a circle shaped piece of foam. Attach a ribbon to the top and in a few hours they had a keepsake wreath with ornaments that were no longer being used.

Another friend of mine made holiday ornaments and decorations out of her backyard acorns along with old paper napkins and wrapping paper—of all things. These are colorful, unique, and perfect to bring out each year during December. Lately, I've even seen the most beautiful Christmas tree ornaments made out of twisted old magazine pages that look like tiny, intricate sculptures. With so many websites and social media sites out

there these days, inspiration is truly everywhere.

One thing I'm doing this season is making candles that are both beautiful and eco-friendly. This is also a perfect family craft for families celebrating Hanukkah. I'm melting down used candles into new candles and I'm also making new candles from sheets of eco-friendly beeswax. You can buy it in various sizes to make different sizes of candles or you can buy a kit that provides everything you need. Tie a bow around a few homemade beeswax candles and you have the perfect hostess gift.

If you need some inspiration be sure to check out Pinterest.com. It's my new favorite resource for DIY craft projects. Some on my to-do list for the coming months include a dog bed made from an old suitcase, recycled spoon garden markers, and a trivet made from used wine corks.

Taking on few manageable craft projects is the perfect way to connect with your loved ones and create items that can be enjoyed year after year. Do Your Part this year with things you thought you couldn't use again and you might surprise yourself at how crafty you really are.

*Terri Bennett is a veteran TV meteorologist, author, and founder of DoYourPart, everyday green living ideas that are better for you and the planet. Send questions to [terri@doyourpart.com](mailto:terri@doyourpart.com) and follow DoYourPart on Facebook and Twitter.*

## IRAQ

From Page 17

slaughtered in the month of October 2006 alone, according to the United Nations.

By the end of 2006, the U.N. estimated that 100,000 Iraqis were fleeing every month for sanctuary in Jordan and Syria.

Death could come at any moment: from a bomb on a bus filled with people heading for work or from an errant shell on a home as a family enjoyed an evening meal. Or from foreigners. In September 2007, Blackwater contractors guarding a U.S. State Department convoy in Baghdad opened fire on civilian vehicles, mistakenly thinking they were under attack. Seventeen Iraqis died. A U.S. federal judge dismissed the charges two years later because the case was built on testimony in exchange for immunity.

A review by the AP in April 2009 showed that more than 110,600 Iraqis had died in violence since the U.S.-led invasion. The actual number was likely higher because many of those listed as missing were doubtless buried in the chaos of war without official records.

"They wanted Iraq to be a model for democracy to be followed by other countries in the region," a Shiite preacher, Sheik Muhanad al-Bahadli, said of the Americans in March 2007. "Look what happened in Iraq after four years of occupation:

booby-trapped cars and bombs blowing up and killing Iraqis."

In 2007, the tide began to turn, though historians will debate the reason for years. The change was probably a result of a confluence of events. Many Sunni militants concluded that they needed the Americans for leverage against the "real enemy"—the Shiites. Many Sunni insurgents resented al-Qaida's power grab and did not share its vision of a global jihad. Many Shiites recoiled against the brutality and gangsterism of some of their own Shiite militias. And finally the American military surge.

In January 2007, President George W. Bush announced he was sending 30,000 more troops to secure Baghdad and the provinces around it. Talk of a troop withdrawal in 2007, which had been widely expected, disappeared. With the Americans promising and paying for support, more and more Sunni insurgents switched sides and turned against al-Qaida. Eight months into the surge, Shiite militia leader al-Sadr declared a cease-fire and violence began dropping in the capital.

Fighting continued. But the commanding general, David Petraeus, was able to tell Congress by the end of the year that the "military objectives" of the surge were being met. Skeptics, including then-Sen. Barack Obama, acknowledged the trend while noting that the second goal of the surge—to allow the Iraqis to establish a

stable, effective government—remained unfulfilled.

"The surge succeeded in those aspects where the Americans had full control, the military aspects," said Marina Ottoway, director of the Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "There was no willingness to compromise. There still is no willingness to compromise."

With the Stars and Stripes lowered and the last of the troops on their way out, America's role in the Iraq war is over. For Iraqis, however, the war and the struggle to build a functioning democratic state continue. Bombs still explode, gunmen attack police checkpoints. Iraq's government, though far more representative than Saddam's regime, still falls short of an ideal.

Tensions between Sunnis and Shiites, Arabs and Kurds remain unresolved. It's an open question who will ultimately govern in Iraq and whether Iran will in time come to dominate its weakened neighbor.

America will not be abandoning Iraq. The U.S. will leave behind thousands of diplomats and security contractors, whose presence will influence the direction of the country for years to come. Still, the disappearance of uniformed troops will have a profound effect on Iraqis in ways that will take years to define.

For the first time in nearly nine years, Iraq's future will be entirely in the hands of Iraqis.

Less clear is whether America's

mission was truly accomplished. Saad Eskander, who heads Iraq's National Library and Archives, said the Americans created as many enemies as they have allies, and are leaving with only part of the job done.

"What the Americans have accomplished in Iraq is a 50/50 project. It's not completed. The other 50 is up to us," he said. "Either we are people who deserve this country or we don't deserve it."

And what of the American legacy?

"They did get rid of the Baathist Iraq state and Saddam Hussein from power. They did succeed in bringing a proto-democracy," said Theodore Karasik, an analyst at the Dubai-based Institute for Near East and Gulf. But the war also "permitted the rise of people who may not share America's point of view."

History will be the judge, but for now many observers believe the costs in dollars and blood dwarf the war's achievements.

"The U.S. and Iraqi forces scored impressive tactical victories against the insurgents in Iraq during 2005-2009, but the U.S. invasion now seems to be a de facto grand strategic failure," wrote Anthony Cordesman, an analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

"Its tactical victories—if they last—did little more than put an end to a conflict it helped create."

# Life & Style

## 'Idol' runner-up Archuleta to serve Mormon mission

**SALT LAKE CITY (AP)**—"American Idol" runner-up David Archuleta will take a break from his singing career to serve a two-year proselytizing mis-

sion for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The contestant from the 2007-2008 season made the announcement during a Christ-

mas concert Monday in downtown Salt Lake City, according to KSL.com. The 20-year-old Miami native, who grew up in Murray, Utah, said he's not quitting music, but feels a strong call to serve the church.

A video of the concert on Archuleta's website shows him overwhelmed with emotion and crying as he talks about his plans. The crowd screams wildly with the news and gives him a standing ovation.

"It's not because someone told me that I'm supposed to do it, and not because I no longer want to do music, but because

it's the feeling that I've felt I need to do this with my life," Archuleta told the crowd.

Archuleta was 16 and one of the youngest contestants when he competed on the seventh season of "American Idol." The runner-up has since released three albums, one of which debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 chart.

In 2010, he performed with the Grammy-winning Mormon Tabernacle choir at the group's

annual Christmas concert.

Church spokesman Eric Hawkins confirmed that Archuleta had been called on a mission by the faith. Hawkins said he didn't know when Archuleta was scheduled to report for missionary training.

The location of Archuleta's mission has not been disclosed either by him or church officials.

Statistics released in April show the church has more than 52,200 members currently are

serving full-time proselytizing or service missions worldwide. About 75 percent of missionaries are men between 19 and 21. Single women over 21 and retired couples make up the remaining 25 percent.

Single men typically serve for two years, and women and couples serve for 18 months.

Missionaries volunteer for service, but must be selected by program officials in Salt Lake City. They are not paid and must cover their own expenses while in the field.

The church has more than 350 missions worldwide.

## Gerard Butler rescued at big-wave surfing spot

**HALF MOON BAY, Calif. (AP)**—Gerard Butler is OK after being held underwater by some big waves while filming for a movie about a surfer at Mavericks, a famed Northern California surf break known for treacherous, stories-high waves.

Filmmakers were shooting the 42-year-old "Of Men and Mavericks" star paddling out with competitive surfers Greg Long, Zach Wormhoudt and Peter Mel on Sunday afternoon, the San Mateo County Times reported. The four were steering clear of a set of waves in the 15-foot range when a much larger set broke in front of them, said Wormhoudt, of Santa Cruz.

Butler was held underwater for two waves and washed through some rocks while tethered to his surfboard, Wormhoudt said. A safety patrolman on a Jet Ski swooped in and picked up the actor.

Butler was shaken up but not seriously injured, Wormhoudt said. He was taken by ambulance to Stanford Medical Center for examination and was later released.

Wormhoudt said Butler had not surfed much before the

movie but had made an effort to improve his surfing and water skills for the film.

The group had talked about what to do if they got mowed down by big waves, and Butler wasn't trying to show off, Wormhoudt added.

"Everything he was doing was within reason," he said. "We took like four to five pretty big waves on the head. Basically there's nothing you can do."

"It was intense for myself, and I've been through a lot out there."

Butler's publicist Rupert Fowler didn't immediately respond to an email message sent Tuesday. Coast-

side Fire District Battalion Chief Ari Delay would say only that a surfer sucked under by waves was on the beach when paramedics arrived. He wouldn't name the surfer.

"Of Men and Mavericks" is about Santa Cruz surfer Jay Moriarty, who conquered Mavericks as a teen but died in a free-diving accident in 2001 when he was 23.

Maverick's cold water and giant waves have made it a Mt. Everest-like conquest for some surfers.



Butler

IN HUMBLE GRATITUDE

† *Rosita L. Pangelinan*

July 14, 1968 – November 18, 2011

*We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the numerous family and friends who in one way or another extended their helping hands during the Daily Masses, Rosary & Funeral Mass for our beloved*

† **Rosita Camacho Terlaje Pangelinan.**

Our sincere

**Thank You and Si Yu'us Ma'ase**

also goes to the following:

Bishop Emeritus Tomas A. Camacho, Father Jesse Reyes, Father Rey, San Jose Choir, Techa Janice C. Lizama and Choir – Seattle Washington, Techa Helen C. Sablan – Saipan, Mrs. Emi Peter Palican, Kaipat Family, Marvin Guerrero, Cancer Center of Guam ( Dr. Sam Friedman), Commonwealth Health Center (Dr. Joel Smith), CNMI Medical Referral (Saipan, Guam & Honolulu), Governor's Office/Lt. Governor's Office, Mayor of Saipan Office, Straub Hospital & Clinic (Dr. Ian Okazaki), American Cancer Society (Honolulu Office), St. Francis Radiation Center (Dr. Pang), Seattle Cancer Care Alliance (Dr. Keith D. Eaton/Nurses), University of Washington Medical Center (ER Doctors/Nurses), Guam Radiology Consulting (Dr. Berg) Oncologists/ICU Team), Cabrera Funeral Home Service

**Mark Dave S. Pangelinan and Reynee, Sabrina, Markie and Regina**

### 5th Year Death Anniversary



† *Rita Hosono Sablan*  
"Bang" or "Bonnie"

*We, the family of the late †Rita Hosono Sablan, would like to invite all our relatives, friends, and acquaintances to join us in prayer as we commemorate the Fifth Year Death Anniversary of our beloved mother, grandmother, and sister into eternal life.*

*Daily Mass will be offered at San Jose Church in Oleai as follows:*

December 20 – 24, 2011	5:00AM
December 25, 2011	7:00AM
December 26 – 28, 2011	6:00AM

*On the final day, Wednesday, December 28, 2011, breakfast will be served immediately after at the San Jose Parish Social Hall.*

*Si Yu'us Ma'ase  
Ginen I Familia*

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### ★ ★ ★ NOW SHOWING ★ ★ ★



#### The Adventure of Tintin

Thursday 4:30 7:30

Jamie Bell, Andy Serkis  
Adventure • Rated PG

#### Synopsis

DreamWorks presents this computer-animated motion-capture adaptation of Georges Remi's beloved Tintin comic strip in this first installment of a planned trilogy. Steven Spielberg handles direction duties on the initial film, which is set to be followed by a second film helmed by Peter Jackson, who shares producing duties on the films along with Spielberg and Kathleen Kennedy. Jamie Bell provides the voice of Tintin, with Daniel Craig, Andy Serkis, Simon Pegg, Nick Frost, and Toby Jones heading up the rest of the cast. Edgar Wright, Joe Cornish, and Steven Moffat provide the screenplay.



#### Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol

Thursday 4:15 7:15

Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner  
Spy film, Action • Rated PG 13

#### Synopsis

Academy Award-winning director Brad Bird (Ratatouille) makes his live action feature directorial debut with the fourth installment of the massively successful Mission Impossible series. The Kremlin has been bombed, and the blame has fallen on the IMF. As a result, the president initiates Ghost Protocol, and accuses Ethan Hunt (Tom Cruise) and his team of placing the bomb in an attempt to incite a global nuclear war. Now in order to clear the IMF of terrorism charges, Ethan assembles a new team to uncover the truth by using every high-tech trick in the book. But this time they're on their own, and should they be caught, the entire world could be plunged into a nightmare from which there is no waking up. Jeremy Renner, Paula Patton, and Simon Pegg co-star.



#### The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo

Thursday 4:00 7:00

Daniel Craig, Rooney Mara  
Thriller • Rated R



#### Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows

Thursday 4:05 7:05

Robert Downey, Jr., Jude Law  
Action, Mystery • Rated PG 13



#### Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked

Thursday 4:20 7:20

Jason Lee  
Children's/family • Rated G



#### New Year's Eve

Thursday 4:25 7:25

Halle Berry, Robert De Niro, Ashton Kutcher  
Comedy drama • Rated PG13



#### The Sitter

Thursday 4:10 7:10

Jonah Hill, Sam Rockwell  
Comedy • Rated R

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In this image released by Paramount Pictures, from left, Tintin, voiced by Jamie Bell, Haddock, voiced by Andy Serkis, and Snowy await rescue in a scene from "The Adventures of Tintin."

AP

By REUBEN PEREIRA  
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

Billions of blistering barnacles! Steven Spielberg and Peter Jackson's "The Adventures of Tintin" hits theaters Wednesday. Here are 10 things you should know about the world-famous adventurer before you catch the movie.

1. It's spelled "Tintin," not "Tin Tin" and certainly not "Rin-Tin-Tin."

2. "The Adventures of Tintin" is based on a series of 24 comic books created by Belgian artist Hergé (real name Georges Remi) that follow a young reporter/detective named Tintin, his scrappy wire fox terrier Snowy and boisterous best friend Captain Haddock as they travel the globe, solving mysteries, seeking treasures and adventures. Think of him as a cross between a young Indiana Jones and James Bond, minus the womanizing, with a dash of the Hardy Boys thrown in for good measure.

3. The 24 Tintin titles, published between 1929 and 1986, have been translated into over 100 languages and have sold more than 200 million copies. Not bad for a series barely known in the United States. A

large reason for Tintin's timeless and worldwide appeal is attributed to Hergé's meticulously researched stories and striking animation, which drew from numerous political and cultural events of the 20th century including colonialism, Nazism, archaeological discoveries, human rights, the space race, the Cold War and even UFOs.

4. Steven Spielberg had been trying to bring Tintin to the big screen for almost 30 years. He was introduced to the comics in 1981 when a French critic compared the filmmaker's "Raiders of the Lost Ark" to Hergé's hero. Fascinated by the stunning artwork and complexities of the stories, he immediately snapped up the rights, with the blessing of Hergé's widow. Despite this, the property languished in development hell for decades. It was only when Peter Jackson, also an avid Tintin fan, got involved in the production that the ball finally began to role on the ginger-haired detective.

5. "The Adventures of Tintin" combines the stories of three Tintin books: "The Crab with the Golden Claws," "Red Rackham's Treasure" and "The Secret of the Unicorn." Most of the film's plot is based on the

latter book, which is what the film is subtitled as for most of the globe.

6. While Hergé's Tintin adventures are famous for their political subtext, don't expect any in Spielberg's film. "The Crab with the Golden Claws," "The Secret of the Unicorn" and "Red Rackham's Treasure" were written during World War II, when Belgium was under Nazi occupation. To avoid censorship—and the threat of death—Hergé refocused his books released during the war on adventures set in exotic lands.

7. "Tintin" is one of the rare Hollywood films that Americans will be among the last to see. The movie has been playing in most of Europe and Asia since October. Even Quebec got a peek before us. Spielberg and Jackson intentionally did this to capitalize on the series' tremendous worldwide popularity. Their gamble paid off: The film has already grossed north of \$230 million.

8. "The Adventures of Tintin" isn't just Spielberg's first 3-D film but also his foray into motion-capture filmmaking ("Avatar," "The Polar Express"). Spielberg chose to film Hergé's world this way because it al-

lowed him to place the camera in an environment where he could orchestrate anything he wanted, without the shackles of shooting in a live-action environment. The result is Spielberg's most audaciously fun and exhilarating film in almost a decade.

9. Tintin's massive worldwide following has even inspired a cultural study known as Tintinology. Hergé's dense texts have been analyzed, dissected and probed by numerous literary critics, many of whom have published detailed books on the adventures. Those who passionately study and deliberate the themes, characters and motifs in Hergé's adventures are dubbed Tintinologists. Let's see what the Potter-heads and Twi-Hards have to say about that!

10. There's already a sequel in the works! Spielberg and Jackson always envisioned the project as a trilogy. The second film, to be directed by Jackson, will be based on the two-part story "The Seven Crystal Balls" and "Prisoners of the Sun," and will see Tintin, Captain Haddock and Snowy traveling to the jungles of South America to solve another mystery ripe with peril at every corner. Expect that film to hit cinemas in 2015.

## Valuable Hepworth sculpture stolen from UK park

LONDON (AP)—Thieves have stolen a large bronze sculpture by one of Britain's most important modern sculptors from a London park.

The sculpture by Barbara Hepworth, called "Two Forms (Divided Circle)," was discovered missing Tuesday morning after it was ripped from its plinth in south London's Dulwich Park.

Local government officials said they will ask police and their metal theft unit to investigate the matter immediately.

The theft came after Metropolitan Police on Monday dedicated a unit to tackle those who steal cables and car metal parts for scrap metal—a growing problem as prices for copper, lead and bronze soar.



This is an undated handout photo issued by Southwark Council in London, of a sculpture by artist Barbara Hepworth.

AP

The sculpture had been insured for 500,000 pounds (US\$783,080) and is considered

one of Hepworth's most important later works.

Local officials are offering a

reward of 1,000 pounds for information leading to the arrest of the thieves.

# Rebecca Black tops all other YouTube videos in '11

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Rebecca Black's infamous "Friday" video has topped all other YouTube videos of 2011 with 180 million views.

The Google Inc. video-sharing site announced its most-viewed clips of the year Tuesday.

The 14-year-old Black was turned into a viral video celebrity after her parents paid a production company to make the music video for her. "Friday" became an unlikely, off-



This Nov. 11, 2011 file photo shows Rebecca Black as she arrives at the premiere of "Jack and Jill," in Los Angeles. **AP**

key global hit. Because of a legal dispute with Ark Music Factory, the video has had two YouTube incarnations, both of which were tabulated in the year-end count.

The second most popular video was "Ultimate Dog Tease," in which an owner taunts a dog with food and voices its reactions. Third was the "Saturday Night Live" digital short featuring Michael Bolton as a rabid "Pirates of the Caribbean" fan.

## Chaz Bono and longtime partner end relationship

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—A publicist for Chaz Bono says the relationship between the author and activist and his longtime partner has ended.

Howard Bragman says in a statement that Bono and Jennifer Elia "leave this relationship with great love, respect and affection towards one another."

He adds that the two are seeking privacy in the matter.

Bono, who recently appeared on "Dancing with the Stars," and Elia have been dating and engaged for years. The pair dated as Bono, who was born Chastity Bono to musicians Cher and Sonny Bono, changed his gender

through surgery and the court system.

Bragman says no further details will be released about the couple.

Bono has written two books and has discussed his transition in a documentary project that aired on the Oprah Winfrey Network.



In a Sunday, Jan. 23, 2011 file photo, Chaz Bono, left, subject of the Oprah Winfrey Network documentary film "Becoming Chaz," poses with his girlfriend Jennifer Elia at the premiere of the film at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. **AP**

## Bon Jovi: 'Heaven looks a lot like New Jersey'

**RED BANK, N.J. (AP)**—Jon Bon Jovi wants duped fans to know he's not dead, and he has posted a photo proving it.

False reports of the New Jersey-born musician's death spread online after a fake news release surfaced on social media sites.

Bon Jovi is shown in a picture on his Facebook page holding a sign that reads, "Heaven looks a lot like New Jersey." Below that is scrawled Monday's date.

Bon Jovi was performing at a charity concert that night at the Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank. His publicist confirmed Bon Jovi was alive and well and playing the show.

## Doctor: George Michael 'doing well'

**VIENNA (AP)**—A doctor treating George Michael says the British pop star is "doing well" as he recovers from pneumonia, but cannot say if he will be able to spend Christmas at home.

Christoph Zielinski said "we know that he is doing well and we are generally optimistic" about his recovery.

Zielinski told state broadcaster ORF Tuesday that whether Michael can go home for Christmas "is something that we are not in the position to decide." He said "that is something that must be decided in consultation with the patient."

The ex-front man for the pop group "Wham" was admitted to Vienna's AKH hospital late last month after canceling a performance in the Austrian capital.

## Abused man urged to get help and stop suffering in silence

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

**DEAR ABBY:** On Oct. 19 you printed a letter from "Bruised and Abused," a man who is dating a woman who becomes physically violent when they argue. I know this is a touchy subject. I have heard from authorities that about half of domestic violence occurs when a woman throws the first blow.

Most women believe, as the abusive girlfriend said, that her attack on him isn't violence because she's a woman and he is a man. As difficult as it may be, we need to talk about the role women play in the domestic violence cycle as well as the responsibilities of men. I'm saving the letter from "Bruised" to remind me.

**DONALD, A CALIFORNIA DENTIST**

**DEAR DONALD:** Since I printed that letter I have heard from readers telling me my answer didn't go far enough. (I advised him to end the relationship.) Among those who wrote to me were doctors, members of law enforcement and mental health specialists—as well as former victims. My newspaper readers comment:

**DEAR ABBY:** Because we are bigger and stronger does not mean we don't get abused. I was abused by my former wife and an ex-girlfriend before I recognized it for what it was and got myself the help I needed. Nobody else was there for me.

If she is hitting him, he needs to call the police. If he has marks on him, SHE will go to jail. Men are too often ashamed to call the police because men think it reflects on their manhood. However, they need to put that shame aside and get the help they need.

**JOE IN MISSOURI**

**DEAR ABBY:** I'm a retired cop. "Bruised" asked you if what his girlfriend is doing is domestic abuse. Your reply did not mention that his girlfriend hitting him IS domestic abuse. It doesn't matter if the abuser is male or female, nor the size of the victim.

"Bruised" should call the cops and report this before she goads him into a response that gets him arrested. The courts can mandate the therapy she apparently needs.

**RUSS IN HELENA, MONT.**

**DEAR ABBY:** I was a victim. People asked me why I didn't fight back. I wasn't raised to hit women.

In the end, my wife put me in the hospital twice and left me blind in my left eye. She spent nine months in jail for everything that happened.

Violence is violence regardless of who is throwing the punches. Tell that man he needs to get out now! God forbid he ends up dead.

**BATTERED IN ARIZONA**

**DEAR ABBY:** It doesn't matter if he is a boy and she is a girl, or that he is bigger and stronger. Women do abuse men. It's a crime that too often goes unreported. He should contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline (800) 799-7233 or SAFE (Stop Abuse for Everyone) at [www.safe4all.org](http://www.safe4all.org).

**CLAUDIA, Ph.D., LONG BEACH, CALIF.**

**DEAR ABBY:** I agree with you that the man needs to leave "Carmen." But something he wrote in his letter concerns me. He said, "I don't want to end the relationship, but I think it's the only way I can make her see things from my perspective."

This indicates to me that he thinks he can "teach her a lesson" by breaking up with her, and that this would stop her behavior. That would be a huge misconception on his part.

Carmen's behavior isn't something that can be modified through a breakup. It is something that will require intense counseling to correct, if it can be corrected at all. The boyfriend needs to end things for good—and run like the wind!

**BRUCE IN HOUSTON**

**DEAR ABBY:** Domestic abuse isn't just male-on-female. It is very often female-on-male, and partner-on-partner in homosexual relationships. "Bruised and Abused" needs to notify the police, get a restraining order and stay away.

**STUDENT NURSE IN CHAPEL HILL**

## SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

### Welles' Oscar for 'Citizen Kane' sells for \$861K

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—The Academy Award statuette that Orson Welles won for the original screenplay of "Citizen Kane" has been auctioned for more than \$861,000 in Los Angeles. Nate D. Sanders Auctions spokesman Sam Heller says bidders from around the world, including David Copperfield, vied for the Oscar. The 1942 Oscar was thought to be lost for decades. It surfaced in 1994 when cinematographer Gary Graver tried to sell it. The sale was stopped by Beatrice Welles, Orson's youngest daughter and sole heir. Copperfield was outbid in the auction. He says he admires Welles not only for his cinematic successes, but because he, too, was a magician. Welles hosted Copperfield's first television special. The auction house declined to release the highest bidder's name.

### Court deal reached on managing Etta James' estate

**RIVERSIDE, Calif. (AP)**—The husband and sons of terminally ill "At Last" and "Tell Mama" blues singer Etta James have reached a deal on managing her \$1 million estate and medical care. The 73-year-old singer's doctor disclosed last week that James is terminally ill with chronic leukemia, dementia and kidney problems. Her adult sons Donto and Sametto had challenged the decisions of their stepfather Artis Mills, who married the singer in 1969 and is the estate's conservator. Donto James asked a Riverside County judge to appoint him temporary conservator. But *The Riverside Press-Enterprise* says Monday's agreement keeps Mills in place as conservator. At issue was the amount of money available to Mills for the expenses and care of the singer. He wanted \$500,000, while the sons wanted it capped at \$100,000. The judge set it at \$350,000.

### Christina Ricci returns to NY stage in 'Midsummer'

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Christina Ricci's stage debut last year apparently didn't scare her off - she's going back. Producers said Tuesday the "Pan Am" star will join two-time Tony Award winner Bebe Neuwirth in a Classic Stage Company production of William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The off-Broadway show will begin performances March 28 and play through May 6. Neuwirth will play the role of Titania. Ricci will have the role of Hermia. Ricci made her Broadway debut last season in Donald Margulies' "Time Stands Still," replacing Alicia Silverstone and starring opposite Laura Linney, Brian d'Arcy James and Eric Bogosian. Ricci burst onto the scene in 1990 as Cher's daughter in "Mermaids" and has built a long list of film credits, including "The Addams Family," "The Ice Storm," "Speed Racer" and "Penelope."

### HBO axes 3 series while renewing 'Enlightened'

**NEW YORK (AP)**—HBO is renewing its Golden Globes-nominated freshman series "Enlightened," but is axing three other series. "Hung" and "Bored to Death" will not return for a fourth season, nor will "How to Make it in America" be back for a third cycle, the network said Tuesday. "Enlightened," which ended its first season earlier this month, last week earned a Golden Globe nomination for Best Comedy or Musical Series, as well as a nomination for its star, Laura Dern. On the show, Dern plays an unstable career woman who wants to be a social activist. HBO will premiere six new series in 2012. They include "Luck," an untitled drama series created by Aaron Sorkin, "Veep," "Girls," "Life's Too Short" and "Angry Boys," which debuts on New Year's Day.



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ATTORNEYS FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN  
MARIANA ISLANDS

CITY TRUST BANK, Plaintiff,	CIVIL ACTION NO. 97-1054
-v-	SEVENTH AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE
JUAN R. SABLON and ANGELINE F. SABLON, Defendants.	

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to Order issued by the Court in this matter on November 10, 2008, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Real property situated in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, designated as Lot E.A. 839 NEW-6-3, containing an area of 1,329 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. E.A. 839 NEW.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, December 30, 2011, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

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/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

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# Source: Rose agrees to extension with Bulls



**CHICAGO (AP)**—Derrick Rose says there isn't much that excites him. A maximum contract extension, though, just might.

The reigning MVP agreed to a five-year contract extension with the Chicago Bulls worth approximately \$94 million, a person familiar with the situation said.

The *Chicago Tribune*, citing anonymous sources, first reported the deal.

The person spoke to the Associated Press on the condition of anonymity Tuesday night because the deal had not been finalized. The extension will start in the 2012-13 season, when Rose is eligible to make about \$16 million. The Bulls have scheduled a news conference on Wednesday, though they won't say what it is for.

"It's something big, but I think I want to talk more about it (Wednesday), with my family and everybody being there," the Bulls' star point guard said after the Bulls' preseason game Tuesday night. "But it's definitely something big."

And, teammates say, it was well-earned.

"We're all very excited for him," Carlos Boozer said. "He deserves it. He puts in a lot of effort. I wish the contract was for 10 years."



Chicago Bulls point guard Derrick Rose, right, drives on Indiana Pacers point guard Darren Collison, during the second half of an NBA preseason basketball game Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2011 in Chicago.

The chance to join Rose in the backcourt was a big draw for Richard Hamilton. The veteran shooting guard signed with the Bulls last week after being

bought out by the Detroit Pistons, and so far, he likes what he sees.

"He works hard," Hamilton said. "He's young. He's 23 years old and the way he

plays on the floor is the way he practices. In order to be great in this league, you just can't turn it on (during) games. He really has a great work ethic."

The deal is more of a formality than a surprise. Rose and general manager Gar Forman had indicated it would get done, and it was not hard to see why they wanted to stay together.

The Chicago product went from Rookie of the Year to All-Star to MVP in his first three seasons, becoming the youngest player to win that award. About the only thing he doesn't have is a championship ring, and that's what weighs on him as he enters his fourth season—not the money.

"I think I live a humble life," Rose said. "Of course, I know I'll be able to afford whatever I want, but other than that, there aren't too many things that excite me. Me winning is one of the things. Me being around my family, that's another. Money, that's the last thing I think about."

The Bulls came close to winning it all last season, winning a league-high 62 games and advancing all the way to the Eastern Conference finals before losing to the Miami Heat.

Now, they're looking for more.

Rose has repeatedly pointed the finger at himself for the Bulls coming up

short against the Heat in the playoffs. He worked on his inside game in the offseason after expanding his shooting range in previous years, but it's hard to imagine him accomplishing much more than he did last season.

Rose delivered one of the best seasons by a point guard. He also joined Michael Jordan as the only Bulls players to win the MVP award.

The South Side product established himself as one of the league's best players, averaging 25 points and 7.7 assists while leading Chicago to its best season since the championship era with Jordan and Scottie Pippen.

For Rose, the contract extension is just another milestone in a rapid rise from the city's rough Englewood neighborhood to a starring role with his hometown team.

He helped Simeon Career Academy become the first Chicago Public League team to win back-to-back state championships, then led Memphis to the NCAA championship game before the Bulls drafted him with the No. 1 pick in 2008 after defying long odds to win the lottery.

"The Bulls are loyal," Rose said. "They've stayed loyal with me, showed that they trusted me by picking me to come here. I just feel blessed, and I'm just happy that I'm here."

## Ohio State gets bowl ban, other penalties



**COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)**—Ohio State players broke the rules and got to play in the Sugar Bowl anyway. Jim Tressel knew about infractions and let it all happen.

Now the Buckeyes and new coach Urban Meyer will pay for it next season.

The NCAA hit Ohio State with a one-year bowl ban and additional penalties Tuesday for violations that started with eight players taking a total of \$14,000 in cash and tattoos in exchange for jerseys, rings and other Buckeyes memorabilia.

Tressel was tipped to the violations in April 2010 but didn't tell anyone—even after the athletes got caught last December but were allowed to play in the Sugar Bowl against Arkansas if they served suspensions to start the 2011 season. Among those in the group: starting quarterback Terrelle Pryor and leading rusher Daniel "Boom" Herron.

Tressel's silence damaged Ohio State in the eyes of the NCAA and the result is that the Buckeyes, with a plum 2012 schedule and one of college football's best coaches in Meyer, will watch next year's bowl games on TV.

"Had we known what (Tressel) knew, we would not have played those young men in that bowl game," said an emotional Gene Smith, Ohio State's athletic director.

Forced out in May and now on the staff of the Indianapolis Colts, Tressel was called out by the NCAA for unethical conduct and will have a hard time coaching at the college level again.

"He's not going to appeal. He accepts the committee's decision. That's all there is to say," said Gene March, an attorney for Tressel.

The university had previously offered to vacate the 2010 season, return bowl money, go on two years of NCAA probation and use five fewer football scholarships over the next three years.

But the NCAA countered with the postseason ban, more limitations on scholarships and tacked on a year of probation.

"It is still my goal to hire excellent coaches, recruit great student-athletes who want to be a part of this program and to win on and off the field," Meyer said in a statement. "The NCAA penalties will serve as a reminder that the college experience does not include the behavior that led to these penalties."

Ohio State might still have escaped more severe penalties had its problems stopped with the original scandal, which grew out of players' relationship with a Columbus tattoo parlor owner named Eddie Rife who was under federal investigation in a drug-trafficking case.

But the school and the NCAA discovered two additional problems—after Ohio State went before the committee on infractions in August.

Three players were suspended just before the start of the season for accepting \$200 from booster Bobby DiGeronimo. Then midway through the Buckeyes' 6-6 season it was revealed that several players had been paid too much for too little work on summer jobs—supplied by the same booster. He has been disassociated from the program.

The NCAA on Tuesday found Ohio State failed to monitor its athletic programs.

It was all a sobering blow to Ohio State and to Smith, who through the lengthy NCAA investigation had maintained there was no way the Buckeyes would be banned from a bowl game after the 2012 season. He also had refused to surrender a bowl invitation this season in order to save next year's.

"I never went there because we were confident we would not get a bowl-game ban," Smith said. "We were wrong."

As shocking as the Ohio State case was when it broke, it has since been overshadowed by three other scandals in college sports. Former Penn State football assistant coach Jerry Sandusky was charged with more than 50 criminal counts related to child sex abuse, an ex-Syracuse basketball assistant coach was fired after being accused of fondling boys and young men, and a University of Miami booster caught masterminding a Ponzi scheme claimed he provided money, cars and even prostitutes to Hurricanes athletes.

Tressel, who guided Ohio State to its first national championship in 34 years after the 2002 season, was pressured to resign after 10 years with the Buckeyes. The NCAA hit him with a five-year "show-cause" order which all but prevents him from being a college coach during that time.

"Of great concern to the committee was the fact that the former head coach became aware of these violations and decided not to report the violations," the NCAA Division I Committee on Infractions wrote in its report.

Greg Sankey, associate commissioner of the

Southeastern Conference and a committee member, said in a teleconference that Tressel's failure to act was, "considered very serious and, frankly, very disappointing."

Under a show-cause order, any school that hired Tressel would have to present its case for why it needed to employ him, and would risk severe penalties if he were to commit any further infractions after that.

The NCAA also issued a public reprimand and censure, put the Buckeyes on probation through Dec. 19, 2014, and reduced football scholarships from 85 to 82 through the 2014-15 academic year.

The Buckeyes are preparing to play Meyer's former team, Florida, in the Gator Bowl on Jan. 2. Meyer, a two-time national title winner with the Gators was hired to much acclaim on Nov. 28 and has built a solid recruiting class despite the ongoing NCAA problems.

But a bowl ban could affect those verbal commitments. Even if not, next year's Ohio State team will lose the extra practices allotted before a bowl game.

Herron, Ohio State's starting tailback, was suspended not only for accepting improper benefits from the tattoo-shop owner but also in his summer job. He was voted the team's MVP.

Asked if he felt burdened by the NCAA sanctions, the senior said, "Of course. It hasn't been easy the situation we went through. We all definitely learned from it. We moved forward from it."

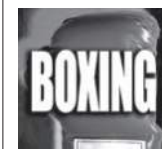
Other players said the Buckeyes could follow the example of Southern California, which received even more stringent NCAA sanctions but went 10-2 this season despite not being able to play in a bowl game.

In light of the many problems in college athletics grabbing headlines these days, Sankey was asked if the NCAA was trying to send a message with the bowl ban against Ohio State.

"I would not suggest that this is necessarily a new day," Sankey said. "But these penalties are significant and that's part of the committee's role in both finding violations and then assessing penalties."

Ohio State President Gordon Gee said Tuesday night he hoped that remedies had been taken to avoid any further embarrassing scandals at the university.

## Officials: Floyd Mayweather Jr. to take deal, clear cases



**LAS VEGAS (AP)**—Boxer Floyd Mayweather Jr. plans to plead guilty to reduced misdemeanor charges in a plea deal resolving felony allegations that he battered his ex-girlfriend, court officials said Tuesday.

Mayweather, 34, will face \$3,000 in fines and could be sentenced to between two days and 18 months in the Clark County jail after pleading Wednesday to one count of battery domestic violence and two harassment charges, said Tess Driver, an aide to Clark County District Attorney David Roger.

The Las Vegas Review-Journal first reported the plea deal Tuesday.

It also includes an agreement for Mayweather to plead no contest next week to misdemeanor battery and pay a \$1,000 fine for poking a 21-year-old homeowner association security guard in the face during a November 2010 argument about parking tickets on vehicles outside the boxer's home in an exclusive, suburban Las Vegas community.

Roger and Mayweather's lawyers did not immediately respond to messages from The Associated Press.

Mayweather had been facing an evidence hearing Wednesday and a decision by Las Vegas Justice of the Peace Melissa Saragosa whether to send him to trial on felony grand larceny, coercion and robbery charges, and misdemeanor domestic battery and harassment counts involving ex-girlfriend Josie Harris.

He could have faced 34 years in state prison if he was convicted of all those charges.

The felony case stemmed from accusations that Mayweather hit and threatened his ex-girlfriend, stole her cell phone and threatened two of their children, then ages 10 and 9, during a September 2010 argument about the woman dating another man.

Mayweather, who uses the nickname "Money," was acquitted by a Las Vegas judge in October of other misdemeanor harassment charges alleging he threatened the lives of two other homeowner association security guards in another argument about parking tickets.

Mayweather is undefeated in the boxing ring, with a record of 42-0 with 26 knockouts.

# Eagles among several teams still in playoff chase



Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Michael Vick (7) scores a touchdown as New York Jets defensive back Kyle Wilson can't make the stop in the first half of an NFL football game on Sunday, Dec. 18, 2011 in Philadelphia. AP

**PHILADELPHIA** (AP)—The Philadelphia Eagles should ditch those pregame “Rocky” videos for another Sylvester Stallone movie that sums up their season.

Given up for dead just a few weeks ago along with several other teams, the underachieving Eagles are somehow still in the NFL playoff race. So instead of showing inspirational clips of Rocky Balboa fighting Apollo Creed, maybe it would be more fitting to have a video montage from the “Saturday Night Fever” sequel directed by Stallone, “Staying Alive.”

With two weeks left in the regular season, 15 teams are in the hunt for the five remaining playoff spots. There are seven teams battling for two openings in the AFC and eight teams in contention for three berths in the NFC.

Four division titles are still up for grabs. The wackiest races are in the AFC West and NFC East, where 8-8 might be enough to win either division.

Green Bay, San Francisco, New Orleans, New England, Houston, Baltimore and Pittsburgh have clinched playoff spots. Dallas (8-6), Atlanta (9-5), Detroit (9-5), Denver (8-6) and the New York Jets (8-6) and Giants (7-7) control their own destiny.

Philadelphia (6-8), Chicago (7-7), Arizona (7-7), Seattle (7-7), Tennessee (7-7), Cincinnati (7-7), Oakland (7-7), San Diego (7-7) and Kansas City (6-8) all need to win and get help to play beyond New Year's Day.

The fact that the Eagles haven't been mathematically eliminated yet is perhaps most surprising. A team that many picked to reach the Super Bowl started 1-4 and was 4-8 following consecutive lopsided losses to the Patriots and Seahawks.

But two straight wins over Miami and the Jets coupled with losses by Dallas and the Giants kept Philadelphia alive. Now it wouldn't even take big upsets for the Eagles to win

the NFC East, er, East.

First, the Jets have to beat the Giants in the battle of North Jersey on Saturday. Then, later that afternoon, the Eagles must beat Dallas. The Jets are 3-point favorites over the Giants. The Eagles are just 3-point underdogs, and they whipped the Cowboys 34-7 on Oct. 30.

If that happens, the Eagles would win the division for the second straight year if they beat Washington at home on Jan. 1 and the Giants beat Dallas in the Meadowlands. The Giants already defeated the Cowboys on the road last week.

“You can't control all that,” Eagles coach Andy Reid said. “The thing you can control is going out there (Tuesday) and practicing, and Wednesday practicing, and Thursday practicing, and Friday, and playing the game. Those are the things that you can control. So take care of that business. I tell myself the same thing, take care of that business, don't worry about the other things. Take care of what you can control.”

Two other NFC teams that seemed to be going nowhere have revived their hopes in recent weeks. Though the 49ers (11-3) wrapped up the NFC West by midseason, the Cardinals and Seahawks never quit. Arizona has won six of seven and Seattle has won five of six to overcome awful first halves. Both teams are fighting for the two wild-card spots, but need the Falcons and Lions to lose.

“The guys stick together and they support each other,” Cardinals coach Ken Whisenhunt said. “That's a big step in becoming a good football team.”

Out in the AFC West, all four teams have a chance to claim first place. The Fighting Tebowski, (aka Denver Broncos) have the inside track. But Oakland and San Diego are just one game behind, and Kansas City kept its faint hopes alive with a stunning upset over previously unbeaten Green Bay.

Led by Tim Tebow, the Broncos won seven of eight to overcome a

1-4 start before losing to New England. They are hoping to avoid another December nosedive and end a five-year playoff drought.

“I definitely feel like we're all right,” Tebow said. “We're excited about where we're at, and we're going to continue to be positive and stay motivated and just try to improve.”

The Chiefs were looking to next year when they fired coach Todd Haley a week ago. But interim coach Romeo Crennel put together a game plan that finally stopped Aaron Rodgers and the Packers, who had won 19 in a row, including the Super Bowl.

Kansas City still needs to beat the Raiders on Saturday, have Denver lose to Buffalo and San Diego drop one of its last two games. If all that happens, the Chiefs will play for a spot in the playoffs at Denver in their regular-season finale.

“We were able to win and we feel good about getting the victory, but we know the season lies in the next game,” Crennel said. “We have to win this next one, and it's a short week. We're looking forward to that, trying to keep this thing moving. We're in the race and we have a chance.”

The Titans missed an opportunity to grab control of the final wild-card spot in the AFC when they became the first team to lose to the lowly Indianapolis Colts (1-13). But Tennessee isn't making vacation plans yet and continues to seek its first playoff berth since 2008.

“We don't have control anymore,” rookie defensive tackle Jurrell Casey said after the loss to the Colts. “We'll have to see how some other teams do, and we'll see how it all plays out. We can't go out there and just give up.”

As the old Bee Gees' song from the “Staying Alive” prequel “Saturday Night Fever” goes:

“Stayin' alive.  
Stayin' alive.  
Ah, ha, ha, ha,  
Stayin' alive.”

## Jets' Ryan disappointed but still talking big

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Rex Ryan got on the phone, paused for a second and then offered the one positive thought he could come up with.

“Well, I got up this morning,” the New York Jets coach deadpanned, “so that's a good thing.”

But Ryan was just getting started on setting the tone Monday for a wild week leading up to a huge showdown with the rival Giants. For anyone who wondered whether the bold and brash coach would be muffled by what he called a “horrible performance” against the Philadelphia Eagles, not a chance.

“Quite honestly, I never came here to be little brother to anybody,” Ryan said on a conference call. “So, it's on.”

Ryan obviously was not happy about the Jets' 45-19 drubbing Sunday, a game some players called “embarrassing.” There were turnovers, breakdowns and missed opportunities. Mark Sanchez got knocked around again, and the Jets' pride—and playoff standing—took a hit.

But, in typical Ryan fashion, the coach used his mouth to shove all that aside. Not that this Giants-Jets game on Saturday needed more hype. In his book that came out in the offseason, Ryan boasted that the Jets were the “big brother” of New York-area football.

“Certainly, we were the better team the first two years,” Ryan said. “We made the playoffs and went to the (AFC) championship game. To say a team's better than you that never made the playoffs is ridiculous. Clearly, we were the better team my first two years. We get to prove it Saturday who the best team is this year.”

Ryan did acknowledge that both the Jets (8-6) and Giants (7-7) are having “disappointing” seasons, but they're still in position to make the playoffs. The Jets hold the last AFC wild-card spot with a tiebreaker edge over the Bengals—for now. The tiebreaker advantage they hold over Cincinnati could change, however, by the end of the season.

Meanwhile, the Giants can still win the NFC East with victories over the Jets and the Dallas Cowboys.

Neither team would be completely out of it with a loss Saturday, but Ryan certainly doesn't want to even think about that scenario.

“There's a lot of talk going back and forth, most of it driven by me,” Ryan said. “But I'll stand by anything I've ever said. I didn't come here to be anybody's little brother. I came here to win, to be looked at that way and to take over not just this city, even though it's the city to take over, but also this league. I haven't accomplished that yet. Saturday, I think, will go a long way to doing that.”

“We have to win this game, we have to get in the playoffs, and the Giants have to do the same. So it's going to be huge.”

Ryan spoke highly of the Giants, saying they're an “excellent” team, adding that he respects Tom Coughlin “immensely,” and calling him “one of the great coaches in the history of the sport.” He also praised Giants defensive lineman Jason Pierre-Paul for having an outstanding season.

But the pleasantries ended there. The Jets are desperate for a win now, and Ryan made it clear he's not here to make friends. Not with bragging rights and playoff lives on the line.

“There's no way I'm going to be second fiddle,” he said. “If we were playing

the New York Yankees, I don't want to be second fiddle to them.”

The Jets appeared overmatched by an Eagles team that many had written off weeks ago. But Philadelphia played with a sense of urgency that was surprisingly lacking in Ryan's team, and the coach thought it was one of the worst performances in his nearly three years in New York.

It was an ugly loss, and got that way early.

Santonio Holmes fumbled on his first catch and Juqua Parker returned it 47 yards for a touchdown. He also dropped a pass that was picked off by Asante Samuel and led to the Eagles' second touchdown. Holmes' day only got worse when he celebrated a touchdown before halftime by standing on the football and waving his arms like an eagle.

He was hit with a taunting penalty and later apologized to Ryan.

“None of us are perfect, but I'm just saying that you wish that thing never happened,” Ryan said. “I don't think it will happen again, but again, I have his back, he has mine and this whole team is that way. We just have to come out and fight for each other. We know it was a mistake and we'll learn from it.”

After solid performances during the Jets' three-game winning streak, Sanchez was barely mediocre—but it didn't help that he was pounded half the time. He was checked out on the sideline after taking a hard pop from Jason Babin in the neck and shoulder in the third quarter.

“I think he's going to be just fine,” Ryan said, adding that he hadn't yet checked with the trainers. “It would be news to me if he had any tests done.”

Ryan's defense—his pride and joy—was also run through like a sieve by Michael Vick and LeSean McCoy.

“We just ran into a buzz saw,” linebacker Bart Scott said at his charity go-kart event in Jersey City, N.J. “That's a good, high-powered football team. You can't have the mistakes that we made. We can't turn the ball over, we can't have blown assignments. You can't allow Vick to sit back there and not get pressure on him.”

New York allowed 420 total yards, including 102 rushing from McCoy and a career-best 156 yards receiving from tight end Brent Celek. Safety Eric Smith said after the game that the Eagles were constantly calling out the Jets' coverages.

“Well, it tells me that we've got to do a better job,” Ryan said. “When you look at the way the league is, there's a lot of ‘tells’ on most teams. Quite honestly, we knew what they were doing on third down, but it never mattered.”

The only saving grace was the fact that Tennessee and Oakland, teams chasing the Jets, also lost.

“We had a setback but when we look up, it seemed like the rest of the NFL had a setback,” Scott said. “I don't know, it was one of those days, if it was a full moon the night before, something in the Kool-Aid. It was one of those days.”

Now, the Jets are working to quickly put that loss behind them and focus on the Giants. If they don't, they know there will be plenty more questions and playoff doubts ahead.

“If we handle our business, we win these next two games, we'll be in the playoffs,” Ryan said. “And that's all that matters.”

# 5 O'clock In The Morning wins U15 Christmas tourney

## »Rollers, Hoops top U10, U12 divisions

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND  
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REPORTER



U15 division's 5 O'clock In The Morning defeated the Knights, 21-11, in the Garapan Community Development Center's 2012 Christmas 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament held over the weekend at the Garapan Basketball Court.

The competition also featured a U10 and U12 round-robin.

5 O'clock is made up of Jeron Ano, Emerson Fera, Irvyn Malonzo, and Toshi Pangelinan.

Leading up to the finals, the Knights snuck past team Underdogs, 15-14, in the curtain raiser, as 5 O'clock trampled Bastosss, 23-7.

The Knights then defeated Tabasco, 19-12, and dropped 5 O'clock, 13-11, to advance to the finals unscathed.

Underdogs made it past Bastosss, 11-5, in their knock-out match and went on to take out Tabasco, 20-9, before being eliminated by the eventual champs, 17-19.

In the U15 finals, 5 O'clock



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

5 O'clock In The Morning players flash the No. 1 sign after winning RBC's 2012 Christmas 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament U15 finals over the Knights Saturday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.

managed a slim, 11-8, lead in the first half thanks to a late 3-pointer by Malonzo.

Then Malonzo and Fera delivered four points apiece in the clutch to come away with the win.

Meanwhile, U10's Rollers, made up of Angelo Factor, John Paul Cruz, and John Tam, pulled off a 10-6 comeback over Ol'Aces in their tiebreaker finals match.

After a 2-2 deadlock in the first half, the Rollers' Factor

came away with four points at crunch time to go with a bucket in support by Cruz.

Defense proved to be the key to the Rollers' success as Ol'Aces edged out Rollers, 15-12, in the first meeting, but fell to its rivals, 8-6, in the second tiff.

In addition, U12's Hoops, comprised of Angelo Factor, Dicky Fera, C.J. Morales, and Kyle Rios, defeated runner-up Big-3, 9-6, in their finals duel.

Big-3 won the first meeting,



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

From left, Hoops' Dicky Fera, Kyle Rios, Angelo Factor, and C.J. Morales pose for a team photo after winning the U12 division in RBC's 2012 Christmas 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament.

20-16, and advanced to the finals in first place after taking down team Whatever, 12-6, in their second game.

Hoops went on to oust Whatever, 13-8, before getting its revenge on the favored trio.

Hoops worked to an early 9-4 lead in the first half with Morales starting the engine with a five-point spark. Then Hoops relied on its defense and held Big-3 to a mere two points in the second half.

Two teams competed in the U10 division, three in U12, and five in the U15 grouping.

The winners will all be presented with medals during GCDC's Family-Fun-A-Thon, slated for Jan. 28, 2012 at the Garapan Basketball Court.

Family Fun-A-Thon will also feature a 3-on-3 tournament between U12, U14 and U16 players with the parents being thrown into the mix.

There are also various side

games planned for the kids such as a spoon toss race, minefield, a paint-balloon war, sneaker scramble, grab bag race, a game of "mom-or-dad calling" and even some volleyball.

"The Family Fun-A-Thon is open to everyone, but one big purpose for the event is because we at the GCDC want people, especially in the Garapan precinct, to know that we are here and our services are readily available for them," said GCDC and Rollers Basketball Club frontman Joe Diaz.

Organizers decided on the theme for the Fun-A-Thon to be losing some weight people may have put on during the holiday season.

The GCDC and RBC are currently collaborating with long-time sponsors DYS and Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogomorro (Cov-Saipan) to help enable most of its events, but are always open to any new forms of sponsorship assistance.

Any small businesses that wish to donate small gifts that the group can use as prizes for participants in their sports activities would be a greatly appreciated. Based on past experience the kids seem to enjoy simple prizes such as food, water park, and movie coupons.

Visit RBC's Facebook page or call the GCDC at 233-8978 for more information.

## STAAL

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lar is my good friend and won MVP in all of Oregon for water polo. He knew I could break the record and I ended up posting 1:01.82 so I dropped nearly

three seconds off my previous time. Realizing that it was the oldest record in the high school made it all the more exciting," the Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan member said.

After his record swim, the former Saipan International School student, who holds vari-

ous age group and CNMI national marks, became an instant celebrity in his school.

"The next day at school they announced my record over the loudspeakers and that was really cool," Staal said.

The 18-year-old swimmer is now back on Saipan

for the holidays and is scheduled to join Tsunami Saipan's practice sessions today. He will return to Oregon next month and is hoping to break more records when he participates in spring tournaments.

"I will try to break the 50

yard freestyle record and then the 100yard backstroke mark. I am less than a second away from breaking both records," Staal said.

Ashland's 50yard freestyle mark stands at 21.09 seconds, which Curtis Taylor made in 1990, while Chris Clark holds

the 100yard mark of 53.56 seconds (1991).

"Districts and State meets will be my next competitions and these will have the fastest students in Oregon. These will be held in spring and I am very excited to compete," the Tsunami Saipan swimmer said.

## SABLAN

From Page 28

Taulitan started its season with five straight losses, but revamped in the clutch, winning its last 10 in a row all the way to the Promise Land.

The team rode the wave through district play over Cen-

tral Catholic High School and then advanced over Sherwood, Jesuit, Sunset, and Lake Oswego in the double-elimination state tournament.

They bested Sherwood, 5-4, in the opening round and rolled over Jesuit, 14-7, in Round 2 before advancing to the semifinals over Sunset, 3-2.

Taulitan held a twice-to-

beat advantage over Lake Oswego in the finals, however its rivals did force a winner-take-all rematch, grinding out a 2-1 victory in their first meeting.

Sablan took the mound for an inning of relief that match, and was given the ball back as the starter in the winner-take-all bout.

He only went on to pitch a complete game and virtually shut down Lake Oswego.

His team backed him up with an early 3-0 lead and they never looked back.

Sablan also attended Showball Baseball's 2011 Winter West Coast World Series Camp last weekend at Verdugo Park's Stengel Field in

Glendale, California.

Showball Baseball is a collegiate showcase camp organized in 2007 by former Texas Rangers players John Novak and Derek Otteveare. The organization also conducts softball camps.

Players at the camp were showcased in front of the NCAA's Top 30 baseball col-

leges where they got to learn from the coaches during the evaluative process.

Sablan was one of about 120 players divided among eight teams that made up the field.

He is listed at 5'6 and 155 lbs and, in addition to pitcher, plays second base, third base, shortstop, and outfield.

## CNMI

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The team is made up of Cedric and Devon Ada, Carl and Frankie Camacho, Ricardo Dela Cruz, Jacob and Jonah Flores, Brett Halstead, Kyle and Russell Hocog, Dave Hosono, Arthur Jebehn, Khobby Kaipat,

Leroy Regis, Ian Rogolifoi, and Lancaster Secharmedal.

By rule, all of the players must all be born between 1994 and 1996 and not turn 19 prior to Dec. 31 of this year.

Therefore, they are primarily first-year Saipan Little League Big Division players.

These players also participated in the SMLBA's 2011 Sum-

mer/Fall Youth Summer Baseball League program.

The CNMI's competition includes teams from Australia, Guam, New Zealand, and Palau.

The islands participated in the event back in 2004, where Australia took the crown.

On measuring the competition, Rogolifoi was frank, "We

know that all the teams are good, but so are we. I think that they are looking out for us just as much as we are looking out for them. Except for Guam of course, we are closer to home, but we still need to get off to a good start right out of the gate."

The CNMI drew a double-header on opening day and will kick off the tournament against

Palau at 10am followed by a 1pm appointment with New Zealand.

The rest of the schedule will be released when confirmed.

It looks like a double-round robin format with a gold and bronze medal features at the end, however according to the current schedule, the CNMI is set to face Guam three times

and Australia only once.

The team held its first practice last Tuesday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield and plan to hold regular sessions every Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday; weather permitting.

For more information, look up Baseball Confederation of Oceania at [www.sportingpulse.com](http://www.sportingpulse.com).

## OLD

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second behind Jones.

Others who are on the ranking list are former U15 players who moved up to the highest age group in the CNMI junior tennis division. Daniel Park is currently ranked third with 1,050 points,

followed by Amami Sakano (900), Christian Miller (600), Angelo Jones (600), Jake Lee (500), Primo Po (500), and Clay McCullough-Stearns (250).

In the girls U18, Theecl dislodged her sister Thea in the top spot with the former earning 750 points (runner-up in DFS tournament) and 1,000 (Tan Holdings Classic). Thea, who got

1,000 from the DFS event, is in second as she opted not to join the girls U18 singles draw in the Tan Holdings competition.

Completing the ranking list are Alina Ishikawa (750), Melody Johnson (600), Yumi Ito (600), Jodel Fernandez (500), Amy Arenovski (400), and Yuri Song (300).

The boys U15 has new leaders in Christopher Cajigan and

Moris Villanueva after last season's pacesetters climbed up to the U18 division, Cajigan and Villanueva each gained 1,500 points to lead Carl Dela Cruz (1,350), Seiya Eda (900), Chris Park (750), Dylan Ackerman (600), Daniel Lim (500), Colin Ramsey (400), Aaron Lee (400), Tommy Choi (300), Bob Kim (220), Quintin Ramsey (150),

Po (125), Chris Cepeda (90), and Kennedy Izuka (80). Most of the ranked players in the U15 division played in the U12 age group last season.

Mikayla Lopez is steady at the No. 1 spot in the girls U15 division, leading former U12 players. She collected 2,000 points from two first place finishes this year, 650 points ahead of sec-

ond-running Negahr Rastguiry (1,350). Emily Jones is ranked third with her 900 points, followed by Adele Hudkins (800), Johnson (750), Tammy Ackerman (750), Jazmin Rayphand (300), and Ishikawa (200).

Rankings in the two other age groups (U12 and U10) will be published in *Saipan Tribune's* Friday edition.

# Trench Warz: Supremacy

PHOTOS By  
WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND



Referee Keith Nabors puts the Trench Tech featherweight title belt around Guam's "The Real Deal" Wusstig after his bout with Trench Tech's Shane "Pikaboo" Alvarez in Trench Warz 15: Supremacy held last Dec. 16 at the Royal Taga Ballroom of the Saipan World Resort.



Trench Tech's Mark "The Dark" Nuique, right, has his hand raised by referee Keith Nabors after defeating Predator Combat's "Tabi" Jay Muna in their bantamweight match.



Fasi "Quickdraw" Jesse, right, has his hand raised by referee Keith Nabors after defeating Mai Tai "The Charger" Charley.



Trench Tech's Cuki Alvarez, center, has to separate Trench Tech's Mylo "Bam-Bam" Lassiter, right, from current PXC champ Kelvin "The Big Hit" Fital of Marianas Elite after the former's one-sided heavyweight main event victory over Guam's Manny Chong.



Trench Tech's Mark "The Dark" Nuique, top, goes to work from the mount position in his bantamweight bout against "Tabi" Jay Muna.



Trench Tech's Martin "Ning-Bo Slice" Cepeda, right, gets ready to connect with a haymaker that sent Keith Corpus to the mat in the second round of their middleweight bout.



Tinian's Craig "Earthquake" Borja works for top position in his 135-lb bout against Jake Ilo.



Guam's Rob "The Real Deal" Wusstig tries to sink in a rear-naked choke on Trench Tech's Shane "Pikaboo" Alvarez in the second round of their featherweight title bout.



Tinian's Renz Benghit, left, and John Ilo both connect simultaneously in their K-1 kickboxing match.



Guam's Jared Melon, left, has his hand raised by special guest referee Frank "The Crank" Camacho after defeating Dung Castro.



Trench Tech's Cuki Alvarez, right, presents NMI Crime Stoppers with a donation check during a break in the action.



**Eagles among several teams still in playoff chase**

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

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## Staal smashes swim record in Oregon

**Old, new leaders in jr. tennis rankings**



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Mikayla Lopez, seen here competing in a local tournament early this year at the American Memorial Park tennis court, is still the No. 1 player in the girls U15 division.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
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REPORTER



There is a mixed of old and new leaders in the CNMI junior tennis rankings after two competitions for the 2011-2012 season were completed.

In the boys U18 division, 2010-2011 No. 1 player Rafael Jones, still holds the top spot after earning 1,750 ranking points. Jones gained 1,000 from the 2011 DFS Micronesian Tennis Championships in May after ruling the U18 singles. He added 750 more ranking points, following a runner-up finish in the 3rd Annual Tan Holdings Tennis Classic last month.

Jones failed to notch back-to-back U18 singles crown after bowing to Thea Minor, who also participated in the boys draw in the DFS tournament and finished third for 500 ranking points. Minor now has 1,500 to place

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## Sablan pitches HS to state championship

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND  
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REPORTER



Saipan's Jared Sablan led Taulitan High School to Oregon's 2011 Futures State Championship title after holding down rival Lake Oswego High School on the mound, 5-2, in the finals held last August.

Sablan recently moved to Oregon, but started his baseball career as a Saipan Little League player and was part of the 2010 Junior League championship team.

A sophomore in his rookie season in the mainland, Sablan was a staple of Taulitan's pitching staff during the team's remarkable postseason run.

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Kai Staal competes in the 100yard breaststroke race for Ashland High School in Oregon early this month.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
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REPORTER

CNMI swimmer Kai Staal has brought his record-breaking performance in Oregon, shattering Ashland High School's 25-year mark in the 100-yard breaststroke race after competing in the Oregon School Activities Association-sanctioned meet early this month.

Staal, who moved to Oregon and enrolled at Ashland High School for his senior year last summer, timed in at 1:01:82 in the 100yard breaststroke race against North Medford to surpass the 1:02.66 Tiago Reis recorded for Ashland in 1986.

"Several weeks before this meet against North Medford, I swam a 1:04.24 in the 100yard breaststroke, but I felt I could drop more time and break the record. Against North, the entire team was screaming because

they saw my pace for the first 50 yards and knew if I pushed it I had a chance at breaking the record," Staal said in an email he sent to *Saipan Tribune* last Monday when he made a stopover to Japan after a 12-hour flight from San Francisco.

"My heart was racing and I was shivering with excitement as I swam. Some people don't realize it, but there is so much energy in swimming, not just physical but emotional as well. Forrest Kol-

See STAAL on Page 26

## CNMI prepares for 18U Oceania AAA Championship

CNMI junior national baseball player Khobby Kaipat, right, soft-tosses to teammate Kyle Hocog in the batting cage at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield last Tuesday.

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND  
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REPORTER



Saipan Major League Baseball Association president Tony Rogolifo has assembled a Junior National CNMI baseball team to compete in the upcoming 2012 18 &

Under Oceania AAA Championship at Guam's Paseo Stadium from Jan. 27 to Feb. 3, 2012.

The event is a qualifier for the XXV 18U Baseball World Championship, scheduled from Aug. 30 to Sept. 8, 2012 in Seoul, Korea.

Rogolifo will manage the team with coaches Syl Ada and Bern Cabrera.

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jared Sablan poses while holding the Oregon 2011 Futures State Championship trophy after pitching Taulitan High School to a 5-2 victory over Lake Oswego High School in the title match held last August.